

# **JOURNAL OF AGGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY**

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## Editorial Introduction

by Major Stephen Court

Greetings in Jesus' name. Mercy and peace to you from God our Father. I trust the battle progresses well on your front. Welcome to JAC126 - the 126th edition of Journal of Aggressive Christianity. JAC126 is the Major Harold Hill issue. It is an opportunity to salute a penetrating Salvo prophetic thinker - or, thoughtful prophet, whose influence runs backward half a century and forward likely until Jesus comes again (a date that we anticipate will be sooner by his influence, 'speeding His return!').

We're blessed that Colonels Margaret and Lawrence Hay contribute the lead entry to this special issue, 'An Open Letter To Major Harold Hill, PhD'. This will give you a taste of his life so far.

And the rest of issue includes ten past Hill entries in the JAC catalogue (a few of which appeared elsewhere in the past or originated as taught lectures), as follows:

From JAC37: Leadership In The Salvation Army: A case study in clericalization (riffing on his singular book)

From JAC51: The Salvation Army and the Priesthood of all Believers (in which he sets the record straight, and throws down the gauntlet)

From JAC90: Comrades In Arms (a fascinating historical glimpse into the Salvation War during the Great War)

From JAC54: Sacrifice in Reasonable Service (a rare common sense on the ramifications of Romans 12:1)

From JAC64: Four Anchors From The Stern (which most will identify as my favourite article based on references and links and 'shares' of it in the intervening years - highly recommended not only for reading but for applying)

From JAC87: Hierarchy and Holiness (Hill steps on a lot of toes and grabs a lot of attention and maybe changes some minds, and maybe even hearts)

From JAC92: Worship In The Salvation Army (this is a detailed recounting of a long history trying to sort out sincere worship - not for the faint of heart)

From JAC99: Tribute to CSM Cyril Bradwell (a beautiful, insider's look at a member of the Order of the Founder - one legend remembering another)

From JAC86: Vision For The Lost Or Lost Vision (a good old-fashioned prophetic call)

From JAC68: If I Had My Time Over Again... (A looking back; a summing up. Hill quotes his father: "At the end of the day, the only part of our work that may endure is

what we have contributed to the lives of others." JAC126 is just a sliver of enduring work)

We salute you, Major Hill.

God bless The Salvation Army.

Stay close to Jesus. Much grace.

## An Open Letter to Major Harold Hill, PhD

Colonels Margaret and Lawrence Hay

Dear Harold,

The *Journal of Aggressive Christianity* wants an article about you by 15 March. Of course, the response was 'Yes', followed by an archaeological dig through a stack of manila folders for yellow post-it notes marked HH. First to surface was Ingrid Barratt's November 2017 article *A Dangerous Mind* in the *New Zealand War Cry* to mark the launch of your history of the Salvation Army. 'A dangerous mind' is surely a unique appellation to describe any living officer in an official Army publication, sparking enquiry into how well 'aggressive' and 'dangerous' describe the humble, humorous, and, let's say it, holy man we have in mind.

A suitable biographer for you won't be easy to find. In the meantime, this letter's modest aim is to point to the significance of your writings, rising like the islands of Aotearoa/New Zealand from the subterranean range of your exceptional thought and life.

Back in the 1960s, when you, as a university student, became the first editor of *Battlepoint* magazine, there were anxious attempts by some at THQ to leg-ropé your 'dangerous mind'. The skit in one of the student reviews of those years contrasting 'a thoroughly grand young man' with 'an anti-euphonium, John Robinsonian, SASF young man' might have had you in view. But the lively friendship between you and our brilliant, Quakerly territorial commander of the day, Commissioner AJ Gilliard, who spoke to the Students' Fellowship of having become an officer 'in spite of as well as because of' what he had, as a youth, experienced in the Army, probably clinched your intention to offer for 'The Work'. The outcome for you and Pat was a lifetime of service as officers in educational, medical and corps work in Zimbabwe and New Zealand.

As COs in corps small and large you and Pat were caring, creative and courageous. The Wellington City Corps newsletter for March/April 1990 gets straight to the point: 'Dear friends, here are some things to pray about', followed by three paragraphs of such things, and then the question, 'Why pray about these things? To twist God's arm; to make him make things go our way? Hardly!....and then you continue about how the three paragraphs 'are areas of corps life which we want to see prosper in whatever way God chooses.'

Your lecture on 'Meeting Leadership as Pastoral Care', delivered at the Meeting Leadership Course held in 1995, was no armchair dissertation but grass-roots learning, your introduction reading:

1. Desired outcomes of pastoring;
2. Components of a meeting;
3. Principles for making latter achieve former.

Those principles, namely: Integrity in leadership; Whole body ministers to whole body; Lost sheep also need pastoring; and God is the centre, are classic Hill, and could be instructive for chewing and digesting by Army meeting leaders elsewhere.

At Wellington City Corps in the 1990s you introduced something completely different: Sunday Night Live for inner city youth, which ran for several years, attended by an average of 220 young people. The programmes outline music by band, songsters and rock group, drama, short Scripture readings, and message topics such as 'Forgiveness – Is it really possible?', 'How on earth do you cope with your family?', and 'How to wreck a good friendship', all rounded up with supper. I well remember taking a friend, a teacher from China, to a Sunday Night Live in 1994, and her urgent whisper, 'I want to join this church!' during proceedings. Not all the comrades agreed with her however, to your cost.

As well as your pastoral work there's your writing, a remarkable, irreplaceable resource for the Army – and beyond.

Your first major publication, in 2006, was *Leadership in the Salvation Army: A Case Study in Clericalisation*. This volume was, as we needn't tell you, based on the years of study and research for which you were awarded your PhD from the Victoria University of Wellington. The foreword was written by Ian Breward, Senior Fellow in the History Department of the University of Melbourne. Dr Breward makes the comment that 'Major Hill's study deserves to be widely read within and outside the Army itself.'

Then, in 2007, came your edited work *Te Ope Whakaora: The Army That Brings Life*, described as 'a collection of documents on the Salvation Army & Maori 1884-2007'. A mark of the quality of this work is that Judith Binney, Emeritus Professor of History in the University of Auckland, was willing to provide a foreword, in which she says 'this fascinating collection of documents reveals the virtually unknown history of the Salvation Army's work among Maori....This history "opens the books" on the Salvation Army and its work in a thoughtful manner. It is a collection worthy of a wide readership.'

In 2014 your third book was published: *Saved to Save and Saved to Serve: Perspectives on Salvation Army History*. This was introduced in a foreword by John Larsson, Retired General of the Salvation Army, as 'a book so original that it creates a new genre; it gives us an MRI scan of the Army.... Taking a wide range of key issues of contemporary relevance, the author traces their history .... always an independent mind, [he] at times dons his prophet robe and challenges our thinking, and he also gives a voice to outside critics of the Army and inside thinkers who differ from the official line.'

Your latest major research project was the extensive contribution you made to the volume edited by Kingsley Sampson, published in 2018, entitled *Under Two Flags: The New Zealand Salvation Army's Response to the First World War*, described by Lieutenant-Colonel Christopher Pugsley, DPhil, one of New Zealand's most respected military historians, as filling 'an important gap in our knowledge of New Zealand's response to that war'.

There's a tide of other historical and theological writing, too: an international on-line course on Salvation Army history, academic papers, articles and letters on equality for women, homosexual rights, the charismatic movement in the SA in NZ, ordination, the 12-step AA programme for addictions other than alcoholism, war and peace, Zimbabwe's plight, the accountability movement, the importance in the Army 'for serious print discussion and record of important issues', and much more. Anyone seeing the name H. Hill on a piece of writing may expect to find freeze-dried dynamite therein, always delivered with grit and grace.

You have at times been spotted, sketching away in the back row at Salvation Army conferences where well-worn subjects are being re-chewed. Cartoonist and prophet are, in you, closely related. You illustrate what Rowan Williams, former archbishop of Canterbury, meant about values not being something we quite like -- 'sport and fish and chips,' for example -- 'but, what deserves honour in our life together, what has claim upon us, something that would point us towards sacrificial or difficult actions.'

Harold, you may be remembered as the saint of unpopular causes. In recent years territorial leaders in New Zealand have found your theological and historical insight invaluable, as you have, with them or alone, represented the Army on major ecumenical and interfaith forums. Such concerns are low on the radar of most NZ Salvationists, except briefly as at the time of the Christchurch mosque murders in March 2019. You have for years represented the Army in this field, culminating last year in two major meetings, the first arranged by the Wellington Abrahamic Council between the city mayor and the leaders of the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches, rabbis of the orthodox and reformed Jewish synagogues, and the imam of the major mosque, each speaking for seven minutes on a vision for the city in 50 years time with respect to religious landscape, attitudes to diversity, the place of religion in society, and how we work together, followed by discussion. Your speech, pointing to the caring, transforming, reforming mission statement of the SA in NZ, in the context of a secular society, where you want to see, not a return 'to Christendom or the Caliphate', but for 'religion in our society to be honoured and influential, because we have earned the right to be heard,' with grass-roots interfaith work as vital in building 'a critical mass in public opinion'.

The second recent significant inter-faith gathering at which you represented the Army was called at short notice by Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern to learn what the religious leaders of NZ are doing to encourage diversity and toleration within the community, and how the government could help to these ends. The territorial commander was eager to hear your reflections and recommendations, based on a Salvation Army history of support for such initiatives straddling the Founder's 1886 *O&R for Field Officers*, up to SA endorsement of the *Statement of Religious Diversity* in 2006-07, but the low level of corps SA involvement in inter-faith activities in NZ underlines the reality that your work in this field remains little known or treated as irrelevant by many Salvationists.

Future historians of the Salvation Army may comment on the strangeness of Army events called 'Thought Matters': excellent monthly open gatherings at the Booth College of Mission, and annual conferences in Australia or NZ. You have been a key participant and a staunch supporter of the Thought Matters movement, Harold, but your way of life illustrates that thought matters all the time. If Shakespeare's 'he thinks too much, such men are dangerous', is true, so be it. In short, while not aggressive, you are incisive and fearless, possibly dangerous to those demanding the military clarity of quick answers and slick sound bites that social media may provide.

Recently, reading Mark Oakley's preface to his book about George Herbert's poems, where he speaks of Herbert as 'a poet worth getting to know for anyone interested in humanity's inner being, the benefits of honesty, the mystery and love of God, and what can be made of religion in a world of projections', I thought for a minute I was reading about you. These Christlike qualities are there to be searched out in your writings and life as many already know, witness the email you received on 27 January 2020 from Matthew Chandavengerwa, a student of yours at Howard Institute back in 1977, who had heard that things aren't going well for you healthwise these days:

*You are in my prayers, Sir. God is faithful, Sir – always! Last time you failed to come through to visit us in Zimbabwe. We are still hopeful that you will be able to come through one of these days.*

*Please give my warm regards to Dr Hill and the rest of the family. I look forward to hearing from you. Best Regards, Matthew Chandavengerwa.*

Harold, with Matthew and a great crowd of witnesses, we give thanks to God for you.

Yours, *Margaret and Laurence Hay*



## Leadership in The Salvation Army - A Case Study in Clericalisation

Major Harold Hill

Officers of my vintage were simply commissioned but after 1978 officers were ordained as well. What does that mean? And does it matter? My endeavour to answer these questions led to a four-year research project and some conclusions which I shall attempt to summarise in this article. The answers lie at least in part in the process of institutionalisation which affects all enterprises, including movements of the Spirit, in the course of which roles which begin as simply functional gradually assume significance as status. In this The Salvation Army has recapitulated in microcosm the history of the church as a whole.

While the charismatic founder may be kept honest by a closeness to the *mysterium tremens et fascinans* and a single-minded commitment to a vision, the second and subsequent generations tend to keep a closer eye on the political implications. A Moses could exclaim, "Would that all the Lord's people might prophesy!" A Joshua's instinct is to complain, "Eldad and Medad are also prophesying," and to urge, "Make them stop – they're not authorised."<sup>1</sup> Against that trend, there has also been, especially in the Judeo-Christian tradition, a counter-cultural, prophetic tradition of protest against the institutions of power. Jesus of Nazareth stood in this prophetic tradition. Jesus and the community which grew up after his death appear to have valued equality in contrast to the priestly hierarchies of received religion.<sup>2</sup> There were evidently varieties of function within the early Christian community, but not of formal status.

### Division into Clerical and Lay States

Over the first few centuries, however, as the Church institutionalised and developed structures to order its polity and conserve its message, and as it accommodated to Roman society and to traditional religious expectations, it developed such distinctions, between clerics in orders and laity.<sup>3</sup> By early in the second century the early charismatic offices had been superseded and a three-fold structure of one bishop, presiding over a council of presbyters and supported by deacons was becoming common. A second factor in the clericalisation of ministry was the adoption of the "priestly" language, a second-century development which became entrenched with the progressive development of the idea of the Eucharist as sacrifice which only a priest had power to perform. With Augustine (died 430) an "indelible character" was attributed to priesthood. A third factor was the incorporation of church and priesthood into Roman society and the state. From the "Christianising" of the Empire under Theodosius in the fourth century, it eventually came to be assumed that all people in

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<sup>1</sup> Numbers 11:26-27.

<sup>2</sup> Matthew 20:25-28, Matthew 23:8-10.

<sup>3</sup> Walter Brueggemann, *The Prophetic Imagination*, Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. 2001, p.22) says "it is clear that the militancy and radicalism of the earliest churches was soon compromised" and cites John Gager, (*Kingdom and Community: The Social World of Early Christianity*, Englewood Cliffs NJ, Prentice-Hall, 1975) for the argument that "if they had not changed to embrace culture to some extent, they would have disappeared as a sectarian oddity."

the state were “Christian”; by the end of the first millennium the boundary between the world and the church was seen as lying at ordination rather than baptism. Even from the third century on it was apparent that all these developments had reduced the “laity” to a passive role. We can call the cumulative process “clericalisation”.

## Reaction and Counter-reaction

Many times in the history of the Church when there has been a renewal of mission, some reaction against clericalism has been involved. Usually the movements involved have either been suppressed or have in their turn become clericalised. Monasticism was amongst the earliest such movements, from the mid-second century on. Originally a lay movement, it became clericalised with a caste system whereby manual labour was performed by lay monks but clerical roles by priests.

The later middle ages in Europe were a period of huge social and economic change, affecting the church along with everything else. The laity became less willing to accept a passive role and there were many religious revivalist movements, some of which became officially accepted while others were denounced as heretical. Both in officially endorsed orders like the Franciscans and in others eventually excluded like the Waldensians, an initial all-lay ethos was eventually clericalised, with priests or clergy coming to dominate them.

The Reformation movements all involved a degree of rejection of clerical superiority. Luther dismissed “*characters indelebiles* ...” as “mere talk and man-made law.”<sup>4</sup> However most the reformers remained wedded to the concept of “Christendom”, in which the State and the Church were essentially the same thing and “the clerical office – whether under the name of *ministerium* (the ministry) or *sacerdotium* (the priesthood) – continued in being as something constitutive for the existence of the Church.”<sup>5</sup> In E. L. Mascall’s words, “what Protestantism did to the religion of Western Europe was simply to substitute a clericalism of the Word for a clericalism of the Sacrament.”<sup>6</sup> It was the “radical reformation”, the Anabaptists and their sectarian successors, who tried to make a fresh start and return to the polity of the primitive church. “It was not that the Anabaptists had no clergy; it is more accurate to say that they had no laity.”<sup>7</sup> As marginalised and persecuted, their situation more closely resembled that of the early Christians.

The immediate precursor of The Salvation Army was the Methodist movement of the eighteenth century. John Wesley unwittingly created what was virtually a parallel church though he was a priest of the Church of England, and refused to allow his lay preachers to administer the sacraments or call themselves “Reverend”. After his death the preachers claimed both rights and Methodism clericalised. However, both traditions, the “lay” and the “clerical”, persist in Methodism to the present day. Most of the subsequent schisms in the

<sup>4</sup> Martin Luther, “An Open Letter to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation”, 1520. *Works of Martin Luther*. Philadelphia, A.J. Holman Coy., 1915.

<sup>5</sup> Emil Brunner, *The Christian Doctrine of the Church, Faith and the Consummation: Dogmatics*, Vol III. London, Lutterworth, 1962, p.98-99.

<sup>6</sup> E.L. Mascall, *The Recovery of Unity: A Theological Approach*. London, Longmans, 1958 p.5.

<sup>7</sup> Larry Martens, “Anabaptist Theology and Congregational Care”. *Direction Journal*, Spring 1992, Vol. 21 No. 1, pp.3-14.

movement – and most of the reunions also – have been concerned with this polarisation.

In retrospect it may be seen that Bryan Wilson's analysis of the process of clericalisation in Protestant sects applies to the broad history of the church as a whole: What does appear is that the dissenting movements of Protestantism, which were lay movements, or movements which gave greater place to laymen than the traditional churches had ever conceded, pass, over the course of time, under the control of full-time religious specialists.. Over time, movements which rebel against religious specialization, against clerical privilege and control, gradually come again under the control of a clerical class... Professionalism is a part of the wider social process of secular society, and so even in anti-clerical movements professionals re-emerge. Their real power, when they do re-emerge, however, is in their administrative control and the fact of their full-time involvement, and not in their liturgical functions, although these will be regarded as the activity for which their authority is legitimated.<sup>8</sup>

The history of The Salvation Army is open to analysis in these terms.

### **Beginning with the Booths**

William Booth inherited the ambiguities of Methodism. He left a Church, the Methodist New Connection, but retained his clerical rank. He denied any intention of founding a "sect" or denomination ("I constantly put from me the thought of attempting the formation of such a people"<sup>9</sup>), but ended up doing so. As Ronald Knox remarks of Zinzendorf, "it is an old dream of the enthusiast that he can start a new religion without starting a new denomination."<sup>10</sup>

The chief formative influences on William and Catherine Booth were Methodism and American Revivalism. Wesleyan influence on Booth can be seen in his emulation of Wesley himself and in parallels between the situation, ethos and doctrines of Methodism and Salvationism. It can also be traced in a degree of ambiguity about the nature or importance of ordination, in his conviction of the importance of lay-participation, and paradoxically, in his equally strong conviction of the value of authoritarian rule. Herein lay the tension, still in evidence, between the Army's commitment to the "priesthood of all believers" and its hierarchical structure. From the American revivalists, such as Charles Finney, James Caughey and Phoebe Palmer, the Booths not only learned about evangelical methods and concluded that there was more freedom in their use outside the control of denominational structures, but also had confirmed their convictions both about the importance of lay-participation and about the value of strong government.

Booth's engagement with a tent mission in Mile End Waste in July 1865 is reminiscent of the Arab inviting the camel to put his nose into the tent on a cold night – soon the camel wholly occupied the tent. By 1867 a revivalist group drawn from a variety of evangelical backgrounds had been transformed into a proto-sect with its own

<sup>8</sup> Bryan Wilson, *Religion in Secular Society*. London, C.A. Watts, 1966, p.136.

<sup>9</sup> G.S. Railton, *Heathen England*. London, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. 1878, p.22.

<sup>10</sup> Ronald Knox, *Enthusiasm*. OUP, Oxford, 1950, p.403.

headquarters, a number of preaching stations, systems for processing converts and for poor relief, a membership document, a first annual financial statement, and paid staff as well as volunteer workers. By 1878, this mission had evolved into a highly centralised organisation, a people with a distinct and common identity, and its own full-time, employed leaders, analogous to clergy (although like Wesley's lay-preachers, Booth's evangelists were forbidden to style themselves "Reverend"<sup>11</sup>). Under its new name of Salvation Army, the mission was poised to embark on a decade or more of exponential growth. With Divisional and Territorial Commands from 1880 it was possessed of an episcopal hierarchy.

### **Clerical Roles**

The clerical class in the church has come to be associated with specific functions – the administration of the sacraments, pastoring of the flock, the preaching and teaching of the Word and the government of the church. What can we say then about the roles of Booth's Missioners, the Evangelists, later Officers, under these headings?

### **Sacraments**

The monopoly of the sacramental function became the distinctive mark of the emergence of priesthood in Christianity. The Christian Mission and, until 1883, the Salvation Army, practised infant baptism and celebrated the Lord's Supper, and it is apparent that officials of the mission led these rites. The discontinuance of the practice could also have implications for the "clerical" role of officers. Booth's explanation in *The War Cry* simply said that (1) sacraments were not essential for salvation; (2) that if he insisted on having them there would be "grave dissensions" within the Army; (3) that the Army was not a church; and (4) that the question could be left until we shall have more light on the subject. (5) In the meanwhile Salvationists were free to take the sacrament at other churches, and (6) should feed on Jesus continually and ensure they had been baptised with the Holy Ghost. (7) Finally, having warned against dependence upon mere forms, he announced a form of service for the dedication of children.<sup>12</sup> Additional reasons subsequently offered, in addition to the dangers of formalism and contentious Biblical hermeneutic, have included the danger of strong drink to people converted from drunkenness, avoidance of controversial subjects, resistance to women administering the sacraments, the avoidance of anything smacking of a separate priesthood and the value of a distinctive non-sacramental witness.

David Rightmire's study goes behind these presenting arguments and places the Army's early theology in the context of Victorian society, the Wesleyan revival and the nineteenth century holiness movement. He makes the point that by the mid-19th century Wesleyanism had lost touch with its founder's sacramental theology, maintaining the forms but subordinating other means of grace to the Word. The American holiness revival teaching of Caughey, Finney and Phoebe Palmer, already

<sup>11</sup> Christian Mission Conference Minutes, 1870.

<sup>12</sup> *The War Cry*, 17 January 1883, p.4, col. 2.

mentioned, also “emphasised a pneumatological ecclesiology that needed little continuity with historical institutions.” Rightmire’s argument is that once the Booths’ “Holiness” or “Second Blessing” theology was fully developed, it provided a spiritualised substitute for sacramental theology.<sup>13</sup>

It is interesting to compare the course of The Salvation Army’s relationship with the Church of England with that of its Wesleyan original. Methodism grew out of the established Church and the question was whether it could be contained. Salvationism was an independent entity and would have had to be grafted on to the Anglican stock – a more difficult exercise. With Methodism, the preachers, who had not hitherto been permitted to officiate at the sacraments, assumed this role. Salvation Army evangelists and officers, who had enjoyed this privilege, relinquished it.

The history of the Salvation Army also illustrates the maxim that if the sacraments did not exist it would be necessary to invent them, to adapt Voltaire. Forms and ceremonies have been substituted. The Directory or catechism for children in 1900 set out “The Army’s Five Ordinances” as (1) The Dedication of Children, (2) The Mercy Seat,<sup>14</sup> (3) Enrolment under the Army Flag, (4) Commissioning of Officers and (5) Marriage according to Army rules.”<sup>15</sup> To these might be added the uniform (surely “an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace”, as well as the nearest the Army comes to a medium for excommunication), and the recent practice of “installing” officers in certain commands.

All of this also indicates that although sacramental observances are usually taken as the initial catalyst for the process of clericalisation in the Church, the Army’s clericalisation gathered momentum after their abandonment (apart from the substitute sacraments described above), suggesting that clericalisation is a sociological process independent of a theological base.

## Pastoring

Pastoring of the flock was not the original function of the Christian Missioners – they were above all itinerant evangelists. The gradual assimilation of evangelist into pastor in the role of the individual Salvation Army officer has paralleled the gradual metamorphosis of the “para-church” sect into denominational church. That trend has been accompanied by the gradual loss of the individual and corporate sense of responsibility of the ordinary members or soldiers to exercise the pastoral role. Within the early Salvation Army there was strong emphasis on the “lay”-pastorate, with the appointment of Visitation Sergeants with pastoral responsibility. With pastoral care undertaken by those with a more settled existence, the Evangelists or Missioners, and subsequently the officers, were itinerant. Itinerancy was a tradition inherited from Methodism, with frequent changes of pastorate for clergy, combined with the more

<sup>13</sup> R. David Rightmire, *Sacraments and the Salvation Army: Pneumatological Foundations*. Metuchen, NJ, The Scarecrow Press, 1990.

<sup>14</sup> Booth took over from his American revivalist exemplars the practice of the “altar call” when penitents were invited to kneel at the front of the hall. At first a simple form or row of chairs sufficed to kneel at, but despite protestations that the place itself was of no merit, the “Mercy Seat” became sacred furniture. A 1908 article on “The Proper Use and Care of the Penitent Form”, described the new style introduced at the recently opened West Green Citadel in London. “The floor surrounding the Mercy Seat is slightly raised and enclosed by heavy red cords, which are easily removed when the form is in use.” (*The Field Officer*, September 1908, pp.327-8.)

<sup>15</sup> *The Salvation Army Directory, No II*, London, 1900, p.62.

limited role of the evangelist. Appointments tended to be for a matter of weeks only or months. Railton wrote that, “we refuse to allow our officers to stay long in one place lest they or the people should sink into the relationship of pastor and flock, and look to their mutual enjoyment and advantage rather than to the salvation of others...”<sup>16</sup>

In time, officers became under increasing pressure to exercise a pastoral role in addition to the evangelical one. Bramwell Booth’s 1899 book on officership included a section on “Shepherds and their Flocks”.<sup>17</sup> Whatever Railton’s fear of a pastor-flock relationship developing, it was inevitable; nurturing of new converts would establish expectations for continuing care.

### ***Preaching and Teaching***

Clergy have usually assumed the magisterial role, the responsibility for teaching, in the Church. Although the *Orders and Regulations for Officers* prescribed instructing and drilling the troops as a significant officer-role, Booth saw preaching as the definitive clerical task (“one who had nothing else to do but preach”<sup>18</sup>) and we have seen that in his movement there was no thought of reserving this task to any special group. The reverse was his intention.

It should be noted however that whatever the theory, the Evangelists and then the Officers became the main speakers and preachers as time went on. A rearguard action against this practice has been fought ever since. In 1928 Bramwell Booth wrote to an officer in charge of a corps he had visited, advising him to, “Rope in your own people in so far as it is at all possible to take part in platform [i.e. preaching] work if the soldiers and locals felt the responsibility of speaking to the people the words of life and truth they would fit themselves for this work. This would relieve you of some of your platform responsibilities, and thus enable you to tackle other work.”<sup>19</sup> But many officers still jealously guard their prerogative in this respect, to the neglect of the gifts of their soldiers.

### ***Government and Leadership***

On the fourth point, government, only the full-time, employed evangelists or missionaries attended the Council of War in 1878, whereas lay-delegates had attended earlier Conferences. Murdoch avers that this action disenfranchised the laymen of The Salvation Army and “stripped them of the right to participate” in the organisation’s government.<sup>20</sup> At the same time as the Mission metamorphosed into The Salvation Army, it constitutionally reverted to Wesley’s original Methodist model of benevolent dictatorship. The government of the movement was clearly concentrated in the hands of a leading group, though always as a delegated authority derived in the end from the General himself. This remains the case today. The role of an officer is to command, to direct the government of the organisation at a particular level. The post-

<sup>16</sup> G.S. Railton, *Heathen England*, p.144.

<sup>17</sup> W. Bramwell Booth, *Servants of All*. London, 1900, pp.93-9.

<sup>18</sup> George Scott Railton, *General Booth*, London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1912, p.17.

<sup>19</sup> Catherine Bramwell Booth, *Bramwell Booth*. London, Rich & Cowan, 1932, p.492.

<sup>20</sup> Norman Murdoch, *Origins of The Salvation Army*. Knoxville, University of Tennessee Press, 1994, p.91.

1877 polity certainly left the way open for the elevation of an “officer class” in the all-lay Army.

In sum, then, of the four clerical roles of officiating at rites, pastoring, preaching and government, it would seem that Christian Missioners became Salvation Army officers with only the fourth of these fields unambiguously as their largely exclusive prerogative. Their other roles were in the process of development – though also in the direction of a clerical monopoly. However, Officers were not yet clergy in any generally recognised sense at this time, any more than the Army itself was regarded as a church.

### **What the Founders Said**

Here we find an essential ambivalence as far as clericalism is concerned – and as far as being a church is concerned. The pragmatic origins of ministry and polity have meant that the Army has championed the concept of the priesthood of all believers and rejected the clerical role, while at the same time it has claimed ministerial status for its officers whenever that has seemed advantageous. Thus it has inherited and carried forward the ecclesiological contradictions of Methodism referred to earlier.

#### ***All Lay, All Priests***

Like Wesley before him, Booth did not see his Evangelists as clergy. He complained in 1877 that some had resigned because “they rub up against some Baptist or Primitive preachers and get ministerial notions.”<sup>21</sup> Railton quotes Booth, addressing young officers, as saying,

I have lived, thank God, to witness the separation between layman and cleric become more and more obscured, and to see Jesus Christ’s idea of changing in a moment ignorant fishermen into fishers of men nearer and nearer realization.<sup>22</sup>

William Booth wanted to disabuse his officers of the notion that there is any “exclusive order of preachers” or that ministry was

confined to a particular class of individuals who constitute a sacred order specially raised up and qualified... on the ground of their ancestors having been specially set apart for it, and authorised to communicate the same power to their successors, who are, they again contend, empowered to pass on some special virtues to those who listen to their teaching... I deny the existence of any order exclusively possessing the right to publish the salvation of God... I honour the Order of Preachers; I belong to it myself... but as to his possessing any particular grace because of his having gone through any form of Ordination, or any other ceremonial whatever, I think that idea is a great mistake.

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<sup>21</sup> *Christian Mission Magazine*, July 1877, p.172.

<sup>22</sup> George Scott Railton, *op.cit.*, p.17.

And I want to say here, once and for all, that no such notion is taught in any authorised statement of Salvation Army doctrine or affirmed by any responsible officer in the organisation... the duty in which I glory is no more sacred, and only a few degrees removed in importance, from that of the brother who opens the doors of the Hall in which the preacher holds forth... As Soldiers of Christ, the same duty places us all on one level.<sup>23</sup>

Booth clearly rejected any apostolic succession or clerical character as needed to authenticate his officers' functions. Not only were officers not "clergy" but soldiers in effect *were*. In an 1898 address he hoped that soldiers would not shirk their duty "by any talk of not being an officer."

You cannot say you are not ordained. You were ordained when you signed Articles of War, under the blessed Flag. If not, I ordain every man, woman and child here present that has received the new life. I ordain you now. I cannot get at you to lay my hands upon you. I ordain you with the breath of my mouth. I tell you what your true business in the world is, and in the name of the living God I authorise you to go and do it. Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature!<sup>24</sup>

### **"Ministers Who were Not Ordained"<sup>25</sup>**

At the same time as we have these, and many other, very clear statements that The Salvation Army is an essentially lay movement, we find the growing assumption that officers do enjoy a distinctive and special role – or status. The specialness of the officer role was emphasised on two counts; firstly because of the need to foster and encourage the *esprit de corps* of officers in order to promote the effectiveness of the Army's leadership, and secondly from the desire to secure recognition of the officers within the wider community. Both would inevitably contribute to the process by which function would assume status.

Although not claiming any ordination for their officers, the Booths regarded them as in every way equal to the clergy of other denominations. Sandall reports a statement by William Booth, made in 1894: "The Salvation Army is not inferior in spiritual character to any organization in existence... We are, I consider, equal everyway and everywhere to any other Christian organization on the face of the earth (i) in spiritual authority, (ii) in spiritual intelligence, (iii) in spiritual functions. We hold 'the keys' as truly as any church in existence."<sup>26</sup> While these claims were made of the Army as a whole, the exercise of "authority" and the holding of the "keys" could be taken as peculiarly clerical or leadership roles. Booth was in no doubt that the Army would rise or fall on the quality of its leadership. His first *Orders and Regulations*, written particularly for officers leading a growing movement, noted that "The work must, of course, depend mainly upon the officers..."<sup>27</sup> Bramwell agreed with this,

<sup>23</sup> William Booth in *The Officer*, June 1899, pp.202-3.

<sup>24</sup> *The War Cry*, 22 January 1898, p.9, col.3.

<sup>25</sup> The phrase is Catherine Bramwell Booth's: *Bramwell Booth*, p.221.

<sup>26</sup> Robert Sandall, *History of The Salvation Army*. London, Nelson 1950. 2, p.126.

<sup>27</sup> *Orders and Regulations for The Salvation Army*, London, 1878, p.8.



writing, "Officers ... they are the spinal column of the affair and their tone and spirit is its spinal marrow."<sup>28</sup>

In a circular to senior commanders, William Booth spoke of the role of officers as akin to a priesthood: "Indeed, the fact is ever before us – like Priest, like People; like Captain, like Corps."<sup>29</sup> "More and more as I have wrestled with the [new] regulations this week," he wrote to Bramwell in 1903, "it has been borne in upon me that it is the Officer upon whom all depends. It has always been so. If Moses had not made a priesthood, there would have been no Jewish nation. It was the priesthood of the Levites which kept them *alive*, saved them from their inherent rottenness... and perpetuated the law which made them."<sup>30</sup>

Such a statement suggests that Booth's own views were changing. Ervine comments that "This was a far different note from any that he had hitherto sounded. Priests had never previously been much esteemed by him who was more ready to admire prophets than priests... The Soldier-Prophet was about to leave his command to a Lawyer-Priest. A younger William Booth would have known that this was dangerous, but Booth was old and solitary and tired, and old men want priests more than they want warriors."<sup>31</sup> Robertson attributes this change to Booth's anticipation of a possible leadership crisis during the "period of routinisation" by his Supplementary Deed of 1904 (which provided for the deposition of a General adjudged unfit for office and the election of a replacement by a High Council). "Further, he came to the conclusion that the priesthood of all believers, although already effectively dropped in practice, had to be attenuated as an ideal."<sup>32</sup>

In an address to Staff Officers, reprinted after his death, William Booth said

The Salvation Army also claims possession of certain authority – authority received from God and man adequate for the work required from it, and equal to that of any other Christian organisation in existence, if not superior to that of many which pass under that name. I claim such authority for myself as an ambassador of Christ, and I claim it also on your behalf. I claim for the Army all the authority necessary for the ruling of its people, their admission to its ranks or their exclusion from it... When I am asked to state the grounds on which the Army claims authority over the consciences and conduct of men, I reply that we do these things not on the authority of man, or of any outside organisation of men, but by the authority of God Himself.<sup>33</sup>

In his memoirs Bramwell Booth echoes similar sentiments.

In this, we humbly but firmly claim that we are in no way inferior, either to the saints who have gone before, or – though remaining separate from them, even as one branch in the vine is separate from another – to the saints of the

<sup>28</sup> Letter of 24 February 1899, in Catherine Bramwell Booth, *op.cit.*, p.218.

<sup>29</sup> William Booth, *Letter to Commissioners and Territorial Commanders*. 1900, p.15.

<sup>30</sup> Harold Begbie, *Booth*. II, p.306.

<sup>31</sup> St. John Ervine, *God's Soldier, General William Booth*. London, Heinemann, 1934. II, pp.777-8.

<sup>32</sup> Roland Robertson, "The Salvation Army", in Bryan Wilson, *Patterns of Sectarianism*. London, Heinemann, 1967, p.80.

<sup>33</sup> *The Officer*, September 1915, p.579.

present. We, no less than they, are called and chosen to sanctification of the Spirit and to the inheritance of eternal life. And our officers are, equally with them, ministers in the church of God, having received diversities of gifts, but the one Spirit – endowed by His grace, assured of His guidance, confirmed by His word, and commissioned by the Holy Ghost to represent Him to the whole world.<sup>34</sup>

In the First World War Bramwell Booth forbade officers to volunteer for military duty, saying

It seems to me that the consecration of their lives to the things of Christ, which all our officers have made, is inconsistent with their voluntarily drawing the sword in earthly warfare. There can be no doubt that they are as truly ministers of Christ's gospel as were the apostles themselves, and as ministers of God they are covenanted to approve themselves in patience, in affliction... And so I say I cannot approve their taking the sword, or any other carnal weapon.<sup>35</sup>

These examples, and many like them, would support the view that the Army and its leaders progressively tended to claim a clerical role and status for officers. So, we have seen that The Salvation Army, in attempting to maintain a sectarian equality of believers, resisted the idea that its officers were clergy like other clergy. At the same time, partly because of the autocratic temperament of its founder, it adopted a military, hierarchical structure which served to expedite the process of clericalisation.

The conditions of officers' service would constitute their professional milieu in a way that could not be true of non-officer, volunteer Salvationists. The mystique of the Call to officership, the spiritually intensive nature of officer-formation in training and the sessional group bonding with peers, the extent of personal commitment involved in the Covenant and Undertakings, the ranking system, the distinctive functions and roles of officers and the intensity of the all-absorbing work, together with the sense of corporate identity and *esprit de corps*, gave officership a character which could be described as clerical compared with that of the rank and file.

This ambiguity over the status of officers arose in part from the Methodist theological roots, as we have noted, and in part from the fact that traditional ecclesiastical and canonical distinctions were of little interest or relevance. Salvationists were, as far as they were concerned, *sui generis*, needing no external ecclesiastical validation or referencing. Pragmatic decisions beget principles. The Founders set out to do just whatever appeared the most practical thing to do next. Rather than intentionally taking the historic pattern of the church as a model they fought against it as repugnant to their view of the ministerial role of Christians in general. For all that, they could not avoid bringing with them from their church background ways of thinking about how the church should be organised. The irony is that they ended up with a similar model of clergy and laity and an episcopal system of

<sup>34</sup> W. Bramwell Booth, *Echoes and Memories*. London, Hodder & Stoughton, [1925] 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. 1977, p.82.

<sup>35</sup> *The War Cry*, 19 September 1914, p.7. (Cited by Shaw Clifton, PhD thesis, *The Salvation Army's Actions and Attitudes in War Time 1889-1945*, Kings College, London 1989, p.215.)

government under different names. It is difficult *in practice*, leaving aside ecclesiastical distinctions of legitimacy and apostolic provenance, to distinguish officership from the clerical status in any other church.

## Transitions

Sociologists refer to the period of “routinisation”, during which initially radical sectarian movements gradually accommodate to the world around them, and “denominationalise”. While Robertson considered that The Salvation Army had resisted this process and therefore dubbed it an “established sect”,<sup>36</sup> in the longer view it may be seen that the Army in the western world has conformed to type in this respect.

Although it was Donald McGavran’s twentieth century phrase,<sup>37</sup> the phenomenon of “redemption and lift”, was remarked upon by John Wesley nearly two hundred years earlier.

The Methodists in every place grow diligent and frugal; consequently they increase in goods. Hence they proportionately increase in pride, in the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, and the pride of life. So although the form of religion remains, the spirit is swiftly vanishing away...<sup>38</sup>

Salvationists, originally archetypal “working class”, have participated in the general rise in standards of living in western countries, with increased opportunity for education and diversified occupations. The children and grandchildren of those who had experienced the miracle of changing beer into furniture did not necessarily enjoy a vital conversion experience of their own or inherit the same evangelical imperative.

A concomitant of this development was a change in mindset from “mission to maintenance”; from a crusade to change the world to a preoccupation with the interests and needs of existing members. It is not without significance that the international statistics for numbers of corps and officers in 2004 were little different from those at the death of Bramwell Booth in 1929.<sup>39</sup> (The recent growth in soldiery statistics derives from a new, third world, growth spurt, offset by steep decline in the European homelands.) A diminution of evangelical fervour was also matched by a decline in commitment to sectarian “perfectionism” of the kind represented by the Army’s Wesleyan holiness theology, and the beginnings of a more conscious pluralism of theological outlook.

These changes have also been reflected in a moderation of the Army’s opposition to “the world”: only an embargo on alcohol, tobacco and gambling survives where once wearing a feathers on ladies’ hats, make-up and jewellery, and attending dances, organised sports events or the cinema were equally reprehensible. The Army no longer provides an all-embracing social milieu for many Salvationists, and the movement no longer maintains what Bryan Wilson

<sup>36</sup> Roland Robertson, *op.cit.*, pp.49-105.

<sup>37</sup> Donald McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth*. Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1970, pp.262-275.

<sup>38</sup> Quoted by J.H. Plumb, *England in the Eighteenth Century*. Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1950, p.97.

<sup>39</sup> 1929: 15,163 corps and 25,427 officers. 2004: 15,339 officers and 25,716.

called “a totalitarian rather than a segmental hold” over its members.<sup>40</sup> Higher education is no longer regarded with suspicion.

At least in much of the “western world”, this process of routinisation occupied perhaps the first sixty years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As far as the theme of this essay is concerned, the end result of this was that the Army became another “mainline” denomination, in which the officers were regarded, and regarded themselves, as clergy, and the soldiers thought of themselves as laity. Despite a strong and continuing tradition of soldier involvement in “the work”, the officers became the professional religious class. Thomas O’Dea summarised the tendency thus:

there comes into existence a body of men for whom the clerical life offers not simply the “religious” satisfactions of the earlier charismatic period, but also prestige and respectability, power and influence... and satisfactions derived from the use of personal talents in teaching, leadership, etc. Moreover, the *maintenance* of the situation in which these rewards are forthcoming tends to become an element in the motivation of the group.<sup>41</sup>

## Into the Second Century

Although we have observed a denominationalising tendency in the period reviewed above, the Army’s official rhetoric remained sectarian. The inevitable tectonic tension between these two continental plates moving in opposite directions began to surface as the movement entered its second century in the 1960’s. This again conformed to the usual pattern of such movements in their life-cycle, as indeed had happened with the early Church itself. A period of consolidation and reflection begins. The movement becomes more self-conscious, and begins to clarify and rationalise what it had been doing, as well as adjusting to the fact that it is now operating in a world strangely different from that in which it had taken shape. Roger Green, referring to various late 20th and early 21st century initiatives in Salvationist theological discussion, comments that “these are still tenuous efforts for a denomination yet in its primacy. The Army is only now coming into an understanding of what it means to have a corporate theological life.”<sup>42</sup>

## The Debate

As far as our theme is concerned the Army entered upon a period of internal debate, expressed for the first time in its history in articles and correspondence, at first in *The Officer* and later in such territorial publications as *The Salvationist* in the UK and *Word and Deed* in USA. We can trace the coming out into the open of the polarities, “lay”, and “clerical”, between the view that office is simply functional and the belief that office confers a status or character, inherited a century before from Church history through Methodism and inherent in the Army as a sociological and ecclesiastical phenomenon.

<sup>40</sup> Bryan Wilson (Ed.), *op.cit.*, p.24.

<sup>41</sup> T.F. O’Dea, *The Sociology of Religion*. Englewood Cliffs NJ, Prentice-Hall, 1966, p.91.

<sup>42</sup> Roger L. Green, “The Salvation Army and the Evangelical Tradition”, *Word and Deed*, May, 2003, p.61.

The debate took place in two phases. For the first twenty-five years – roughly from 1960 to 1985 – it concerned function and status. In the following twenty years, following the introduction of the “ordination” of officers, this terminology naturally shaped the arguments offered. At the risk of caricaturing the variety of views, we can sample here only a few of the contributions made to the debate.

As representative of the “functional” school we can take the unambiguous statement by Australian Commissioner Hubert Scotney:

The distinction made today between clergy and laity does not exist in the New Testament... The terms layman and laity (in the current usage of those words) are completely out of character in a Salvation Army context... It is foreign to the entire concept of Salvationism to imagine two levels of involvement. Any distinction between officers and soldiers is one of function rather than status.<sup>43</sup>

Against that we can cite Colonel William Clark (IHQ), who claimed that by

a direct call from God into the ranks of Salvation Army officership, we have been given particular spiritual authority... Whatever our role ... happens to be for the time being... we are primarily spiritual leaders... Our spiritual authority lies not only or chiefly in what we do, but in what we are... Our calling is to be a certain kind of person and not ... to do a certain kind of job... The “ordained” ministry of the Church – to which body we belong by virtue of our calling, response, training and commissioning – is a distinctive ministry within the body of the whole people of God, different from that “general” ministry of the Church which is defined in the New Testament as “the priesthood of all believers”.<sup>44</sup>

In 1978 General Arnold Brown announced that the commissioning of officers would in future include use of the word “ordain”. This innovation evidently passed largely unremarked until Captain Chick Yuill of Scotland drew attention to it in 1985.

May I suggest that we need to re-emphasise the truth that there is no real distinction between officers and soldiers, that the difference is simply of function... If that little word ‘ordain’ has crept in because of a subconscious desire that other Christians should realise that we are as ‘important’ as the clergy of other denominations, ... in the end it matters not a jot where we stand in the estimation of any who would compile a league table of ecclesiastical importance.<sup>45</sup>

Cadet Stephen Court of Canada took the same line:

There is no difference between the two functions [officer and soldier], there is no distinctive, and so there are no grounds to justify ordination by this argument. The emphasis on ordination and the professional nature of

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<sup>43</sup> *The Officer*, July 1969, p.452.

<sup>44</sup> *ibid.*, July 1976, pp.289-90.

<sup>45</sup> *ibid.*, October 1985, pp.438-40.

officership only serves to widen the artificial gap existing between officers and soldiers. Note I use the term “soldier” rather than the insidious term “laity”.

He concluded by warning against “the gradual abdication of our characteristic birthright in ‘favour’ of a mainstream church identity.”<sup>46</sup>

Against those, we can quote for example the following vigorous support for ordination from a retired officer, Brigadier Bramwell Darbyshire:

In spite of all the stuff about the priesthood of all believers, ordained and commissioned officers are different from non-officer Salvationists. They are not cleverer, wiser, more loved of God than their fellows, but they are special, set apart for Jesus in a way that involves sacrifice and often great inconvenience to their families... No one is more grateful for the Army’s dedicated lay staff than this old warrior; but let’s get it right. They may be as much involved as officers, but there is for an officer a sacramental dimension and if we lose sight of this the Army is finished.<sup>47</sup>

Others again used the term “ordained”, but on their own terms, as implying only a “functional” role. Major Raymond Caddy of IHQ defended it in these terms:

...one of its meanings is closely tied to the idea of organisation which underlies all military structures... means to categorise, to place in a particular ranking... the specific ranking, then, has something to tell us about function. ...this is the classification of people as ministers of religion... to carry out certain roles. These duties are restricted to people of that rank, otherwise there is no point in separating them from the rest.

**He went on to distinguish two kinds of ordination in the Church, one of all Christians, and the other to the exercise of certain spiritual gifts (see Romans 12, 1st Corinthians 12),**

vocations given so that the Church may be governed and served... Particular ministries are recognised and encouraged when the Army commissions or warrants its officers and local officers. However, every Salvationist is ordained to the greater vocation of Christian. There is no higher calling than this.<sup>48</sup>

The debate widened to a general discussion of what roles and functions were appropriate to an officer. These tended to follow the culturally conditioned expectation of clergy in general. Officers were to lead, pastor, preach, teach and disciple, and equip the saints for ministry. Some saw the officer as being assisted in ministry by non-officers; others saw that the officer’s role was to assist non-officers in *their* ministry. Some writers addressed officer conditions of service, such as appointability, as the distinctive mark of officership. A few called attention to officers’ representative

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<sup>46</sup> *ibid.*, May 1993, pp.214-5.

<sup>47</sup> *The Salvationist*, 18 April 1998.

<sup>48</sup> *ibid.*, 20 May 1989, p.5.

role, as head and focus of their community of faith. Some people, while rejecting any spurious status equivalent to priestly character for officership, felt that an entirely functional description could not justify a separate officer role. They therefore looked for an internal, Salvation Army validation, a combination of the officer's own personal sense of calling and the objective fact that Salvation Army officer ministry was an existing reality

to be taken into account. Major Cecil Waters urged a return to an unabashedly Salvationist argument from simple pragmatism.

We will go on looking for a definition of officership unless and until we recognise that officership exists firstly as a convenience by which we organise the Army and secondly as one function, among many, to which we feel "called of God. [It was] impossible to define a concept of officership which is plainly and clearly distinct from that of soldiership. [He concluded] (a) That it would seem that the Army needs full time workers... Most, but by no means all, these workers are officers. (b) That we believe we may be called to be such workers – and this call may refer to officership (rather than employee or envoy status). (c) That to be so called and so engaged is sufficient to sustain our work, our spirit and our identity. I believe we need look for nothing more special than this."<sup>49</sup>

## Official words

### Ordination

Of official statements on this matter the first was General Brown's introduction of "ordination" in commissioning. The Chief of Staff's 1978 letter to Territorial Commanders stated:

It is the General's wish that a slight modification should be made to the wording of the Dedication Service during the Commissioning of cadets, in order to emphasise the fact that Salvation Army officers are ordained ministers of Christ and of His Gospel.

After the cadets have made their Affirmation of Faith, the officer conducting the Commissioning should then say: "In accepting these pledges which you each have made, I commission you as officers of The Salvation Army and ordain you as ministers of His Gospel." In countries other than English-speaking, and where the word "ordained" has no exact equivalent, a translation should be used which will give the nearest possible meaning to the English-language expression.<sup>50</sup>

That the decision did not command universal support might be suggested by the fact that it was reviewed in 1988 and 1892, and the rubric was eventually amended by General John Gowans. A 2002 Memo from Chief of Staff John Larsson instructed

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<sup>49</sup> *The Officer*, July 1992, p.317.

<sup>50</sup> Letter of 30 May 1978 in IHQ Archives.

The commissioning officer will say to each cadet in turn: "Cadet (name): Accepting your promises and recognising that God has called, ordained and empowered you to be a minister of Christ and of his gospel, I commission you an officer of The Salvation Army."<sup>51</sup>

The significant changes here would appear to be that (1) the cadets were to be commissioned individually rather than collectively, and (2) "ordination" was now seen as something already done by God rather than in this ceremony by a representative of the organisation.

### **Response to the Lima Document**

In 1982 the World Council of Churches *Faith and Order Paper 111 on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (Lima<sup>52</sup>), was circulated amongst churches for comment. The Salvation Army's response was included in *Faith and Order Paper 137* of 1987, and also published by the Army itself as *One Faith, One Church*, in 1990. While the intention had been that churches would look for areas of agreement, the majority ended up by drawing lines around their own particular distinctives and the result pleased no-one. Catholics felt the document was Protestant in emphasis; Protestants felt "left out".

The Army identified with Lima where it could. Its main concern seems to have been to defend its non-sacramental stance, and even in its response on Ministry, it appeared somewhat preoccupied with the sacramental issue.

About the question of how Salvation Army ministry is perceived in relation to traditional Church belief about ordination, it appeared to be less sensitive and therefore, missed significant areas of difference. It was vague about the meaning of the language of ordination, which it had recently adopted, and confused the concept of indelible character of orders with the Army's own expectation that officers would commit to life-long ministry. The Army identified with the theology of the "radical reformation" but that it also sought to be included in the fold of "mainstream" ecclesiology by claiming that it was just like everyone else but with different terminology. Or in the case of "ordination", the same terminology.

It concluded that rather than "the highlighting of differences," the Army would prefer to see the churches demonstrating their existing unity in mission and evangelism. It believed that differences in faith and order in the church are issues only to theologians, of lesser concern to lay Christians and of no interest whatever to those outside the church.<sup>53</sup>

### **Community in Mission**

Their work on the Lima document evidently alerted the Salvation Army's leadership to its lack of a coherent ecclesiology and the difficulties inherent in maintaining a merely reactive mode. The book *Community in Mission, A Salvationist Ecclesiology* was commissioned from an American officer, Major Philip Needham, and published in 1987. Needham's basic premise is that "a Salvationist ecclesiology stands

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<sup>51</sup> IHQ Archives.

<sup>52</sup> Named for the city in which took place the final conference producing the document.

<sup>53</sup> *Faith and Order Paper 137*, p.256.



as a reminder to the Church that its mission in the world is primary, and that the life of the Church ought largely to be shaped by a basic commitment to mission.”<sup>54</sup> His ecclesiology deals pre-eminently with the ministry of the Army as a whole, and only *inter alia* with that of the officer corps in particular.

Within the elaboration of this theme, Needham clearly confined the concept of “ordination” to a “functional” role within the movement – and claimed that its significance was best expressed in the word “commissioning”, used of both officers and soldiers taking up specific tasks, while “ordination” was commonly used in connection with “ministries that require theological training, specialised skills, pastoral leadership and a full-time vocation...”<sup>55</sup>

### The work of the International Doctrine Council

The Doctrine Council, inaugurated in 1931, has been responsible for producing successive editions of the *Handbook of Doctrine*. None of the pre-1969 editions mentioned the doctrine of the Church, a concept without interest to the early Salvation Army, and even from 1969 this was discussed only under Trinitarian doctrine, as a Ministry of the Holy Spirit. No reference was made to a “separated ministry”. The 1998 edition, *Salvation Story*, explains that “One very important change since the Eleven Articles were formulated and adopted is the evolution of the Movement from an agency for evangelism to a church, an evangelistic body of believers who worship, fellowship, minister and are in mission together.”<sup>56</sup>

With reference to Ministry, a paragraph explains that all Christians are “ministers or servants of the gospel... share in the priestly ministry... In that sense there is no separated ministry.” However the section goes on to say:

Within that common calling, some are called by Christ to be full-time office-holders within the Church. Their calling is affirmed by the gift of the Holy Spirit, the recognition of the Christian community and their commissioning – ordination – for service. Their function is to focus the mission and ministry of the whole Church so that its members are held faithful to their calling.

They serve their fellow ministers as visionaries who point the way to mission, as pastors who minister to the priests when they are hurt or overcome, as enablers who equip others for mission, as spiritual leaders.<sup>57</sup>

Like *Community in Mission*, this does establish clearly the principle that the ministry of particular persons arises out of the ministry of the whole Christian community, and attempts to explain and justify how this happens in practice.

The Council’s most recent work is *Servants Together*, arising from the 1995 International Council of Leaders’ recommendation that

The roles of officers and soldiers be defined and a theology of “the priesthood of all believers” be developed to encourage greater involvement in ministry (for

<sup>54</sup> Philip Needham, *Community in Mission*, London, 1987, pp.4-5.

<sup>55</sup> Philip Needham, *ibid.*, p.65.

<sup>56</sup> *Salvation Story*, London, 1998, p.100.

<sup>57</sup> *ibid.*, p.108.

example, spiritual leadership, leadership in general), worship, service and evangelism.<sup>58</sup>

The book for the first time puts the Army's ecclesiology in its historical context. It clearly establishes the principle that there is no distinction in status between soldiers and officers, although it then struggles to establish what is unique about the role of the officer. Significantly, and indicative of the Army's growing pluralism, it does allow that a variety of opinion is held on the subject. As an official response to the debate of the previous forty years, *Servants Together* entrenches the Army's traditional ambiguity about the nature of its "separated ministry".

If we were to attempt to sum up the progression to be found through the sequence beginning with the introduction of ordination in 1978 and culminating in the publication of *Servants Together* in 2000, at the risk of over-simplification we might suggest that in the 1970's the pendulum had swung as far as it could in the direction of a status for officers, and that the subsequent works show a move to correct an imbalance and restore a functional point of view – while retaining the movement's traditional ambiguity about the question.

### **Officers who may not be officers**

The ambiguity about the status of officers – whether they are clerical or lay – has further implications for Salvationists who have performed "officer" functions without being accorded full officer status. These include not only non-commissioned and warranted ranks and soldiers, but more surprisingly the women officers, particularly the married women, of the Army.

### **An officer by any other name...**

In every army in the world, it is the non-commissioned officers, the NCOs, who see themselves as the real leaders of the army. The Salvation Army's unpaid, volunteer "local officers", originally the "elders" of the Christian Mission, evolved to become a paid, full-time parallel structure to officership. From 1893, some were appointed as "Envoys", equivalent to Methodist local preachers on a circuit, and from the 1930's these sometimes acted as Corps commanding officers. By the 1940's these voluntary workers were supplemented by full-time paid Envoys who held officer appointments in both corps and social work but without officer training or commission. Finally, by the 1960's some were warranted as "Auxiliary Captains", working under officer conditions but still without officer status, though some later went on to hold substantive rank. The phenomenon of people doing identical work but accorded differing status is fraught with inequities and runs counter to the principle that officership is simply functional.

Although we have referred to the trend for officers to become clergy and soldiers to think of themselves as laity, there has always been a counter-movement, a consistent tradition of soldier initiative and participation in the Army's work. There has always been some tension between the view that soldiers are "cannon-fodder", with

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<sup>58</sup> *Servants Together*, London, 2002, p.127.

lives co-extensive with Army programmes, and the belief that soldiers are the front line of evangelism in the world, engaged in *real* “full-time service”, and to be resourced by officers rather than used. The former approach is always a danger in a clericalising context.

In the “Western world” Army, the second half of the twentieth century saw some attempt to accommodate to the more democratic temper of the times with some consultative machinery on both the local level, with Corps Councils, and territorial level, with a variety of “laymen’s advisory” groups. It is interesting that General Clarence Wiseman, an initiator of the latter, had second thoughts on theological grounds – “to have segregated groupings is really in violation of the concept of the priesthood of all believers... thereafter Officers came officially on to the [Canadian] ACSAL.”<sup>59</sup>

Two weaknesses have dogged all such attempts at spreading the ownership of policy. Firstly, as Peter Price has observed of the Catholic Church: “The consultative structures of the Church are still only ‘recommended’ and ‘advisory’. They do not necessarily facilitate Lay participation in real decision-making. Such participation as well as its authority are dependent on the individual Bishop or Parish Priest, and may be dismantled at will.”<sup>60</sup> Secondly, the default, officer-centred position into which the organisation so readily lapses, attributing omnicompetence to commissioned rank, means that too often business decisions are made by commercial amateurs, with a commensurate loss of credibility in the eyes of Salvation Army soldiers.

A growing late twentieth century trend has been the employment of soldiers in ministry roles – as youth workers, pastoral workers and corps leaders, as well as in social work and administrative roles. This has been particularly the case in western countries with declining officer strength and has provoked further debate about the respective roles and status of officers and soldiers. This has paralleled a similar controversy in the Roman Catholic and some other churches.<sup>61</sup> The difference between the Church and The Salvation Army lies in the fact that the Army does not in theory reserve spiritual ministry and leadership roles for a sacerdotal class. The similarity lies in the fact that in practice, because of its hierarchical structure, the Army has tended to behave in the same way as the Church, and change in this area therefore occasions similar tensions.

### **A Monstrous Regiment of Women**<sup>62</sup>

If a question is whether Salvation Army officers are, or are not, clergy, the question may have even more point in the case of women officers, given that ordination

<sup>59</sup> Minutes of the 1971 International Council of Leaders, p.54.

<sup>60</sup> ‘Vatican II: End of a Clerical Church?(1)’ in *Australian Ejournal of Theology*, [http://dlibrary.acu.edu.au/research/theology/ejournal/aet\\_1Price.htm](http://dlibrary.acu.edu.au/research/theology/ejournal/aet_1Price.htm)

<sup>61</sup> See for example, Mary Ann Glendon, “The Hour of the Laity”. *First Things*, 127, November 2002, pp.23-29, or John T. Pless, “Vocation: Where Liturgy and Ethics Meet”. *Journal of Lutheran Ethics*, Vol.2 No.5, May 13<sup>th</sup> 2002.

<sup>62</sup> I cannot claim this seriously inappropriate pun on John Knox as my own; Lt. Colonel Bernard Watson has anticipated me, for a chapter heading in his centenary history of the Army. (*A Hundred Years War*, London, Hodder & Stoughton 1964, p.28.)

of women was not generally accepted in the 19th century. Equality of the sexes has always been one of the Army's boasts. "In the Army," wrote Florence Booth, "we know no distinction, because of sex, which is calculated to limit either a woman's influence or her authority, or her opportunity to serve, by sacrifice, the Kingdom of God."<sup>63</sup>

Over many years, Salvationists regarded the struggles of other denominations over this question with a certain smugness, not always justified, and on two grounds. The first was theological, in that Salvation Army commentators did not always understand the difference between involvement, even leadership, in ministry and a claim to Christian "priesthood". The second reason for some modesty on the question is that the Army's practice has not always matched its precepts. In fact, over much of its history the Army appeared to retreat from its early promise of gender equality. Single women officers were disadvantaged in comparison to their male peers; married women found their officership merged with and subordinated to that of their husbands.

The reason for this was probably simply male chauvinism and the increasing conservatism of a movement institutionalising and tending to be on the defensive. It might be suggested that this touches on our clericalising theme as well. Whatever the Army's rhetoric, the men thought of themselves as clergy, and in the world to which the Army was accommodating it was not yet trendy to think of the women as clergy as well. While the stand taken by the Booths was ground-breaking in the nineteenth century, they found it difficult to apply the principle of gender equality across the board, quite naturally because they were prisoners of their own times and assumptions. Theological principles are not easily imposed on resistant cultural norms. Andrew Mark Eason's *Women in God's Army* explores and analyses

the cultural and theological foundations upon which the organisation was established. Reflecting views that were similar to those of their male counterparts, most Army women espoused beliefs and accepted roles that were incompatible with a principle of sexual equality. A female officer's moral and spiritual functions in the home, combined with her other domestic tasks, either called into question or placed constraints upon her public ministry... Within the public realm, a married or single female officer was usually confined to responsibilities consistent with the notion of sexual difference. She was encouraged to possess a femininity defined in terms of self-sacrifice, weakness, dependency and emotion. This construction of womanhood allowed women to challenge sinners publicly from the platform or engage in social work, but their overall ministry remained a modest one... Her ideal role was one of service and submission rather than leadership and authority.<sup>64</sup>

The Salvation Army, having in some senses pioneered equality, evidently lost its momentum fairly early in its history, while continuing to believe its own rhetoric. It has only recently begun to address the issues again, firstly as a result of the work of a commission established by General Eva Burrows and its recommendations as implemented by General Paul Rader in the 1990's, and secondly as an

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<sup>63</sup> *The Officer*, August 1914, pp.509-10. (Florence was wife of Bramwell Booth.)

<sup>64</sup> Andrew Mark Eason, *Women in God's Army*. Waterloo, Ontario, Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2003, p.152.

outcome of the International Commission on Officership, under General John Gowans.

### **The International Commission on Officership**

General Paul Rader set up an International Commission on Officership, on the recommendation of the 1998 International Conference of Leaders held in Melbourne. Its purpose was “to review all aspects of the concept of officership in the light of the contemporary situation and its challenges, with a view to introducing a greater measure of flexibility” into officer service.<sup>65</sup>

Most of the recommendations deal with “officer conditions”. To that extent the commission was a response to the ways in which the original expectations of both the officers and the Army as a whole have drifted out of synch with the changing times and world-view of newer generations. However, the findings of this commission and ensuing changes also bear upon the matters at the heart of this paper – the character of officership, and the question of whether officership is perceived as a functional role or a clerical status.

Of the matters traced in this paper, some recommendations had to do with the role of women and the equality of their status with that of men officers in the matter of allowances, women’s appointments and the need for gender balance on Boards and Councils. These largely affirmed, furthered and encouraged reforms already in train. Only with local, territorial exploration, and will to progress, will changes be made.

Secondly, some recommendations bore directly on the status-function dichotomy we have observed through the Army’s (and the Church’s) history. Under this heading we could place those referring to Covenant and Undertakings, open-ended or short-term commissions, diverse models of spiritual leadership and tent-making ministry.

Concerning the status of officership there was an inherent tension between two of the Commission’s terms of Reference: to strengthen the ideal of life-time service and to explore the possibilities of short-term service. The first would shore up the “clerical” assumptions behind officership; the second would permit a greater degree of flexibility based on an “all-lay” ethos. General Gowans opted for the former, perpetuating the two-tier model, both tiers performing the same ministry roles but only one with the status of officership, with Lieutenant becoming a warranted rank to replace those of Envoy and Auxiliary Captain. Gowans was unable to commit the Army to a solely “functional” model, and the movement continues to try to have it both ways.

The Commission was not set up to address the issue of clericalisation, so it is not surprising that it did not resolve the tensions between The Salvation Army’s theology and its ecclesiology apparent throughout its history. It was intended to suggest solutions to practical, organisational problems arising from the tensions between an institutional structure, its evolving constituents and its ever changing milieu. In particular, it sought to modify those service conditions which were bringing pressure to bear on officers and making it harder to recruit and retain officers in some territories. However, those conditions and tensions are to some extent the result of and inseparable from the process we have described as clericalisation. Pragmatic

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<sup>65</sup> Norman Howe, “The International Commission on Officership, A Report”, *The Officer*, August 1999, p.19.

rejigging of regulations without recognising and adequately taking into account the underlying sociological and ecclesiological processes involved, is dealing with symptoms without addressing causes. Such measures may meet the need of the hour, or of a decade or two, but do not go far enough to help regroup the Army for the battles of the coming century.

### **Conclusions**

The Salvation Army had three options regarding clerical status:

**1. There are priests/clerics/people in orders in the Church, with a status distinct from that of the laity, but we do not have them in The Salvation Army.**

This would mean The Salvation Army's acceptance of an "all lay" status for its soldiers and officers and a second class clergy status for its officers, acknowledging itself to be something like an order or an *ecclesiola in ecclesia* rather than a "church" or "denomination". For Booth it was not enough that his officers should be regarded as Deacons and Deaconesses, members of an inferior order.

**2. There are priests/clerics/people in orders in the Church, and we do have them as officers in The Salvation Army.**

The adoption of "ordination" by Arnold Brown, and the claim that the Army's commissioning had always been equivalent to ordination, amounted to this position. This seemed to be an attempt to endorse officially what Salvationists had come to accept in practice over many years, without being very clear about what was meant by it. The confusion that has grown up on this issue within The Salvation Army is, as has been suggested, partly a result of ambiguity about church order inherited from Methodism, and partly from a desire to be accepted by other Christian denominations as one of them.

**3. There are no priests/clerics/orders in the Church, and The Salvation Army does not aspire to any. All Christians are "lay", in the sense that all belong to the people of God, without distinction of status.**

Booth in fact made it clear on more than one occasion that this was his theoretical position; his theology required it. However, the Army's ecclesiology was shaped instead by Booth's autocratic temperament, the need for organisation, the twin demons of militarism and bureaucracy, the susceptibility of human nature to pride and ambition, along with historically conditioned expectations. All these meant that the leadership function, as always, appropriated to itself a dominant role and assumed a regular status. The difficulty lies in the tension between the Salvation Army's hierarchical institutional structure and the "Priesthood of all Believers" ethos inherited from its radical Protestant antecedents. In a word, The Salvation Army has "clericalised".

I suggest that the tendency to clericalisation has had two related adverse effects on the Church, and, on The Salvation Army.

- Firstly, clericalism fosters a spirit incompatible with the “servanthood” Jesus taught and modelled; it is inimical to the kind of community Jesus appeared to call together.
- Secondly, clericalisation by concentrating power and influence in the hands of a minority, disempowers the great majority of members of the Church. It can therefore diminish the Church’s effectiveness in its mission of evangelising and serving the world. It might be possible in fact to argue that the effectiveness of function is in inverse proportion to status claimed.<sup>66</sup>

How might the effect of clericalisation be moderated? We might consider this question under three headings, concerning firstly the vocation of the officer as an individual, secondly the role of the officer, and thirdly the relationship of the officer to the organisation.

### **1. The Officer’s Vocation**

Over the years the Reformation concept of all believers having a calling has been narrowed to a clerical focus, into which the Army has bought. A newer generation is less willing to accept this. To maintain officer recruitment the Army therefore has a choice of what in the Catholic Church is called the “restorationist agenda”, attempting to set the clock back, and emphasising the status of officership, or the alternative is to give full value to the vocation of officership as one ministry option without, by implication, devaluing other callings.

### **2. The Officer’s Roles in the Organisation**

The debate referred to already and the book, *Servants Together* show that a variety of attempts to define the officer role over against that of soldiers all came to grief over the basic presupposition, derived from our rejection of any hint of sacerdotalism, that there was nothing done by an officer that could not be done by a soldier. It is necessary to fall back on Cecil Waters’ dictum that officership is simply the way in which we choose to organise the Army; it has no sacred dimension in itself. It is about leadership.

Given the military metaphor on which the Army is structured, and the necessity of leadership in any human endeavour, it is necessary to ask how we can ensure leadership without the abuse of power to which a hierarchical system is especially vulnerable. Without structural safeguards, all talk of “servant leadership” too easily becomes an instrument of spiritual abuse; systemic privilege and power must be circumscribed. It is true, however, that servant-leader behaviour flows only from servant-leader attitudes, and attitudes are notoriously unamenable to legislation. They have to be caught as well as taught, by the example of what Paul called “working together”, by way of contrast with “ruling over”.<sup>67</sup> Both structural and attitudinal change is required for this to happen.

### **3. The Officer’s Covenant and Undertakings**

The Undertakings signed by the officer commit the individual to a number of conditions intended to ensure his or her full availability to the service, equivalent for

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<sup>66</sup> This analysis refers particularly to the Army in the post-Christendom, post-modern, western world. The present growth spurt in the developing world may relate to the fact that less individualistic societies, with a generally stronger culture of belonging and a traditional respect for authority, still relate more easily to the hierarchical, military structure of the Army.

<sup>67</sup> 2 Corinthians 1:24

example to celibacy for the Catholic priesthood. I would argue that the conditions of officer service have helped create status, in so far as they have set officers apart from other Salvationists. We have seen that this was deliberately fostered, along with all the other devices used to create morale and *esprit de corps*. In my view this has now become counterproductive, in that these conditions no longer serve that purpose for people who are already officers and make more difficult the recruitment of their replacements.

The other significance of the Undertakings is that with the officer's explicit renunciation of any legal claim to remuneration or other benefits of employed status, they are the cornerstone of the Army's sharing the "employed by God" status enjoyed by the clergy of most churches. We have seen that this has until now served to safeguard the Army against legal action by its officers. However, it is an anachronism left over from the Theodosian polity of Christendom, and coming under increasing pressure in secular societies.

Rather than trying to hang on to a *soi disant* clerical status which is irrelevant to the needs of the modern world, we could accept that officers are employees, their covenant no different from that of soldiers in the Army's service. At the same time, we could accord officer rank to anyone in a leadership roles normally exercised by an officer. This rationalisation would end the two-tier structure whereby some officers are more equal than others and the anomaly whereby a "mere" soldier can be the leader and focal representative of the Army in a whole community. Rank and status would lose their pseudo-theological rationale.

Leadership is indispensable to the effectiveness of a movement. It is not suggested that structure be abolished; the nature of human affairs is that structures will happen anyway, and their having some continuity, accountability and legitimacy may be necessary to help mitigate the effect of unrestrained personal power. As O'Dea says, "charismatic authority is inherently unstable and... its transformation into institutionalised leadership is necessary for the survival of the group."<sup>68</sup> But if institutionalisation is inevitable, the prophetic critique, the Reformation's *ecclesia semper reformanda*, is equally necessary. This section of the Conclusion has attempted to propose some small changes in how the vocation of officership is viewed, in how the role of officership is expressed and in the conditions of officer-service, all with a view to moderating the clericalist tendency. Such comparatively minor modifications to Salvationist culture, some structural, some attitudinal, might at least contribute to the process of re-founding, necessary to the future of The Salvation Army.

However, these suggested changes do not amount to any more than "tinkering", while it may be that the challenges facing the Church today are of the same order as the implications of global warming for the environment.

## Postlogue

The range of ways in which The Salvation Army in the West is attempting to come to terms with post-modern society could be compared with various contemporary trends in motor car design. At one end of the spectrum there are those manufacturers fashionably "retro" in style, deliberately evoking the design cues of long-past glory days

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<sup>68</sup> Thomas O'Dea, *The Sociology of Religion*. p.49



as a market ploy for the present but technologically thoroughly advanced – the recent S-type Jaguar, harking back to the classic Mark II of the 1960's would be a prime example. At the other end of the spectrum is the handful of curious “green” hybrid petrol-electric or hydrogen-powered vehicles, showing that manufacturers are trying to plan ahead for the day the oil runs out. And in between, the majority of the industry continues to make incremental model changes from year to year as fashion dictates in the hope of improving their market share.

Likewise, in the Salvation Army, there are the “retros” who seek to reawaken the radical passion of the 1880's – witness an “Army-barmy” website, a “War College” in Vancouver, an on-line *Journal of Aggressive Christianity*, a fashion for “Roots” conventions, a growing network of “614” communities. Such activists have been described as “neo-primitive salvationists”<sup>69</sup>

At the other end of the spectrum there is the secret army of those who have gone AWOL, of those who would prefer to disavow the whole military metaphor as inimical to the spirit of the age, for whom every convention is up for grabs and every received truth open to re-negotiation; who believe that the “oil is running out” for the institutional church. They are of that great company from every denomination who have taken their faith with them when they have left the church.<sup>70</sup> Many are “church-burnt” and are unlikely to return to the ranks under existing conditions. They nevertheless represent enormous potential for some future form of the Church, because they are attempting to work out in practice what it means to be Christian in a secular society without any of the traditional supports or conventions, or are in some cases involved in new, experimental forms of Christian community or ‘emergent church’. Behind the lines is always a dangerous place to do the fighting, and casualties are likely to be high.

And in between, the majority of Salvation Army units try to maintain market share, sometimes by soldiering on and trying to hold the line against change, and sometimes by borrowing whatever seems to be working somewhere else – usually from some fashionable US megachurch, or trying to implement the current gospel of “church growth” or “natural church growth” – or attempting to become a generic “community church”.<sup>71</sup> Despite huge effort and some outstanding successes, they tend in the main to be either just holding their ground or are retreating. The casualties are high here too.

The kind of leadership or officership required by each of these models is likely to differ markedly. For the third of these models the present conception of officership could continue to do duty, still with its tension and ambiguity on the question of status and function. However, retaining such a theological hybrid may continue to give rise to the same kinds of inconsistency and inequity we have observed in the past, and limit the ability of the Army to harness fully the resources of its non-officer personnel. The neo-primitive Salvationists, on the other hand, might just possibly stake out the original conception of a “lay” Salvation Army and, for the time being at least, resist the process

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<sup>69</sup> Shaw Clifton, “What on Earth is Neo-Primitive Salvationism?” The Coutts Memorial Lecture given at the Salvation Army College of Further Education, Sydney NSW, July 2003.

<sup>70</sup> See Alan Jamieson, *A Churchless Faith*. Wellington, Garside, 2000; Alan Jamieson, *Called Again: In and Beyond the Deserts of Faith*, Wellington, Garside, 2004; or such websites as <http://www.dechurched.com/>.

<sup>71</sup> See for example, John Larsson, *How Your Corps Can Grow*, London 1988, or Tim Beadle and Joel Matthews, *Let the Son Shine Out: Let God's Church Find its Place in Your Community*. Toronto ONT, 2000.

of clericalisation. Status is of less significance in the trenches than on the parade ground. The “Underground Army” is unlikely to have officers of any kind, and be less interested in questions of accountability or apostolicity.

In these days of exponential change, when a cultural generation in the West is reckoned at less than seven years, it would be foolish to assume that the present fragmentation and individualism experienced in western life, including religious life, will not swing back towards a desperate search for certainty and authority, for which a restorationist theology, or perhaps neo-primitive Salvationism, might be tailor-made. But there is also the possibility that only the underground church will survive the coming storm.

If we recall that almost every revival of Christian religion in the past has involved a reaction against priestly presumption and a renewal of lay power and activity, it may be that the Salvation Army’s best hope is to rediscover this aspect of its original genius. This is the age of irregulars, not of parade grounds or set piece battles. Like William Booth, one hundred and forty years ago, it would be necessary for The Salvation Army to admit that it did not know where it was going, but that would not matter. The institutional Church always seems to be bound by the answers to the previous age’s questions. It might be better, David Pawson’s words, to “find out what the Holy Spirit is doing and join in.”<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> David Pawson, freelance British house-church leader, speaking in Queenstown, NZ, 9 January 1986.

## The Salvation Army and the Priesthood of All Believers

Major Harold Hill

The “priesthood of all believers”, usually and incorrectly attributed to Martin Luther, is sometimes used to mean that anyone in the church can do anything. This was directly contrary to Luther’s teaching on good order in the Church. His concern was to demolish the idea that there were two “stands” (or “walks”) of life: the spiritual and the fleshly, the sacred and the secular, that of the clergy and that of everyone else. Luther did not deny that there was a need for leadership in the Church – called to the ministry of Word and Sacrament – but denied that such people were made ontologically different from other Christians by ordination; they just had a different role.

The “two stands” view, described by Colin Bulley “as the priesthood of *some* believers”, gradually became dominant in the church over the first millennium.<sup>1</sup> The process by which a priestly elite emerges, with a mediatory role between God and the people, can be described as “clericalisation”. The second view, “the priesthood of *all* believers”, claims that all have equal access, in John Dominic Crossan’s phrase, to “the brokerless Kingdom of God”, and all have their part to play in it.<sup>2</sup>

The Salvation Army has never subscribed to the former doctrine but the kind of language sometimes used of officership is entirely compatible with it.

On the one hand, William Booth denied that there was any “exclusive order of preachers” or that ministry was

*confined to a particular class of individuals who constitute a sacred order specially raised up and qualified... on the ground of their ancestors having been specially set apart for it, and authorised to communicate the same power to their successors, who are, they again contend, empowered to pass on some special virtues to those who listen to their teaching ... I deny the existence of any order exclusively possessing the right to publish the salvation of God... I honour the Order of Preachers; I belong to it myself... but as to his possessing any particular grace because of his having gone through any form of Ordination, or any other ceremonial whatever, I think that idea is a great mistake.*

*And I want to say here, once and for all, that no such notion is taught in any authorised statement of Salvation Army doctrine or affirmed by any responsible officer in the organisation... the duty in which I glory is no more sacred, and only a few degrees removed in importance, from that of the brother who opens the doors of the Hall in which the preacher holds forth... As Soldiers of Christ, the same duty places us all on one level.<sup>3</sup>*

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1 Colin Bulley, *The Priesthood of Some Believers* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2000).

2 J. D. Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (North Blackburn Vic.: Collins Dove, 1991) p. 422.

3 Officer (June 1899) pp. 202-3.

At the same time, Booth also spoke of officers as akin to a priesthood: "Indeed, the fact is ever before us – like Priest, like People; like Captain, like Corps."<sup>4</sup>

*The Officer* magazine claimed:

*The ex-officer, no matter what was the cause that resulted in his loss to our fighting forces, is still a child of the Army. He entered the sacred circle. He became one of us, sharing our joys and sorrows, losses and crosses. He received the commission of a divinely-appointed authority to proclaim Salvation, build up men and women in their most holy faith, and help to win someone to God. He received the spirit of officership, whereby he mingled amongst us, for a season, as one of us, and go where he likes, and do what he likes, the imprint of the life he lived will remain. Time will not efface it; sin even will not blot it out. So that in a sense which we ought ever to remember, the ex-Officer still belongs to The Salvation Army.*<sup>5</sup>

Does that sound like an indelible mark and character conferred by ordination?

These incompatible views about ministry have continued to be held in the Army ever since. Major Oliver Clarke (R) aligned himself firmly with Luther when he wrote in 1961:

*Of recent years I have noticed a growing tendency to pronounce what we call the Benediction ... in the pontifical manner: "The Blessing ... be with YOU all..."*

*We do not claim endowment by apostolic succession in the sacerdotal sense. We believe in "the priesthood of all believers". It was against this practice that the Founder remonstrated ... when Commissioner Jeffries, asked to pronounce the Benediction, merely said: "The blessing of God Almighty be with us all." Note, he even did say us instead of you; but he gave the appearance of administering something instead of invoking the same by saying "May the blessing of Almighty God be with us all."*

*We have already gone far enough already for the good and safety of our Movement in the direction of classifying officership as a higher ORDER. Does this seem to be pedantic? To my view a vital issue is at stake, namely: a Clericalism versus Laity; Ecclesiasticism versus an Evangelical non-conforming Movement...*<sup>6</sup>

By way of contrast, Brigadier Bramwell Darbyshire, wrote:

*In spite of all the stuff about the priesthood of all believers, ordained and commissioned officers are different from non-officer Salvationists. They are not cleverer, wiser, more loved of God than their fellows, but they are special, set apart for Jesus in a way that involves sacrifice and often great inconvenience to their families... No one is more grateful for the Army's dedicated lay staff than this old warrior; but let's get it right. They may be as much involved as officers, but there is*

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4 William Booth, Letter to Commissioners and Territorial Commanders, London, 1900, p. 15.

5 Field Officer (December 1900) pp. 453-4.

6 Officer (September-October 1961) p. 339.

*for an officer a sacramental dimension and if we lose sight of this the Army is finished.*<sup>7</sup>

Lt. Colonel Evelyn Haggett in 2006, basing her argument on God's gift of priesthood to Aaron (Numbers 18:7), saw officership as a "gift of ordination to a sacramental life..." and found it "awesome to be called by God to the priesthood." Officers, she claimed, were "of the cloth" like clergy and priests.<sup>8</sup>

For a Movement which does not practise the sacraments, so ready to point out that the very word is not found in Scripture, we seem increasingly anxious to use it when it suits us – Priesthood returns by the back door.

The Church's history illustrates that function always gravitates towards status, and status validates its claims by asserting that it was all God's plan. As it institutionalises, the early zeal fades, energies are expended on maintaining rather than advancing, and the functionaries get delusions of grandeur. As a spiritual wave peaks and plateaus, even declines, sometimes a new movement strikes out, seeking to recapture the "first fine careless rapture" of the founders. Some of these new ventures, like the Montanists in the second century or the Albigensians in the thirteenth, are discarded as heretical, while others, like the followers of Benedict in the fifth century or Mary MacKillop in the nineteenth, are retained as "orders". Protestant sects follow a similar trajectory; some like the Children of God relegated to the status of cults and others like Methodism becoming respectable denominations.

Most such movements begin by emphasising the equality of believers and rejecting a priestly class, but as they too institutionalise they also clericalise. Bryan Wilson put it like this:

*What does appear is that the dissenting movements of Protestantism, which were lay movements, or movements which gave greater place to laymen than the traditional churches had ever conceded, pass, over the course of time, under the control of full-time religious specialists... Over time, movements which rebel against religious specialization, against clerical privilege and control, gradually come again under the control of a clerical class... Professionalism is a part of the wider social process of secular society, and so even in anti-clerical movements professionals re-emerge. Their real power, when they do re-emerge, however, is in their administrative control and the fact of their full-time involvement, and not in their liturgical functions, although these will be regarded as the activity for which their authority is legitimated.*<sup>9</sup>

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7 Salvationist (18 April 1998) p. 6.

8 Officer (January-February 2006) p. 23.

9 Bryan Wilson, Religion in a Secular Society (London, C.A. Watts, 1966) p. 136.

Not just Protestants. The Benedictines and the Franciscans also became clericalised. Milton complained that “New Presbyter is but Old Priest writ large.” Methodist lay-preachers, with Wesley dead, began styling themselves ministers. A recent Methodist statement admitted, “The challenge remains both to have an ordained ministry... without promoting an indelible spiritual hierarchy”.<sup>10</sup> The Salvation Army mirrored Methodist history, and moved more quickly, while its autocratic founder was still living, probably because its military, hierarchical structure lent itself even more readily to perceptions of status – though it did take us 100 years to start “ordaining” our officers. The Army recapitulates the history of the church in microcosm. My argument is not that officership has become a sacerdotal priesthood in theory, but that the end result is the same in practice.

What *does* that mean in practice for the Salvation Army? Because we do not practise the sacraments does that mean that there is no way in which the officer can assume a mediatory, “pontifical” role between the people and God? Sadly, it *has* happened. While the officer’s leadership was emphasised in the early Army, the importance of everyone else being able to participate in as many ways as possible was equally stressed – in speaking, pastoring, evangelising – and in exercising leadership. That is what has been progressively lost.

Now, what is the problem?

Firstly, it is not what the Founder – I mean, Jesus – evidently proposed. Jesus and the community which grew up after his death appear to have valued equality in contrast to the priestly hierarchies of received religion. Jesus said,

*You know that foreign rulers like to order their people around. And their leaders have full power over everyone they rule. But don't act like them. If you want to be great, you must be the servant of all the others. And if you want to be first, you must be the slave of the rest. The Son of Man did not come to be a slave master, but a slave who will give his life to ransom many people.*<sup>11</sup>

*But you are not to be called “Rabbi”, for you have only one Master and you are all brothers. And do not call anyone on earth “father”, for you have only one Father, and he is in heaven. Nor are you to be called “teacher”, for you have only one Teacher, the Christ.*<sup>12</sup>

As Alfred Loisey observed, Jesus came proclaiming the Kingdom of God, and what we got was the Church.

Secondly, clericalism fosters a spirit incompatible with the “servanthood” Jesus taught and modelled; it is inimical to the kind of community Jesus appeared to call together.

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10 [www.methodist.org.uk/static/conf07/co\\_150607\\_bishops\\_reort\\_responses\\_60.doc](http://www.methodist.org.uk/static/conf07/co_150607_bishops_reort_responses_60.doc), downloaded 16.07.07.

11 Matthew 20:25-28.

12 Matthew 23:8-10.

Salvation Army leaders have been aware of this. Commissioner Brengle also wrote against the “diotrephesian spirit”.<sup>13</sup> “Every Diotrephesian,” he wrote, “loveth to have the pre-eminence’ – not pre-eminence in goodness, Christlikeness, brotherly love, humility, meekness, or holiness, but pre-eminence in name, in fame, popular acclaim, in wealth, in place, or authority. These it is that the members of the tribe lust after, scheme, plot and plan, whisper and fawn and flatter and backbite to obtain.”<sup>14</sup> That’s just *within* officership. Further, a “class distinction” between officers and non-officers has become so entrenched as to be invisible to most officers but painfully obtrusive to many soldiers – and non-Salvationist employees.

Although having a clerical class does not inevitably lead to sacerdotalism, leadership is always in that danger. Yves Congar wrote that “Protestant communions, starting from strict congregationalist premises and an associational and community basis, are in practice as clericalised as the Catholic Church... No doubt there are sociological laws in virtue of which the most ‘charismatic’ religious communities, those most made ‘from below’, quite soon become organisations with authority, traditions, a ‘church’ sociological structure.”<sup>15</sup> Even in the contemporary unstructured house-church movement, as Miroslav Volf notes, “...a strongly hierarchical, informal system of paternal relations often develops between the congregation and charismatic delegates from the ascended Christ.”<sup>16</sup> In fact, the real issue is power, and its exercise. Theology is merely the mask.

Thirdly, clericalisation can diminish the Church’s effectiveness in its mission. By concentrating power and influence in the hands of a minority it disempowers the majority of members of the Church. Congar wrote of the end result of clericalism being that “the faithful got into the habit of receiving without activity, leaving to the clergy the charge of building up the Church – like citizens who leave the making of their country to the civil servants and officials, and the defence of it to the military.”<sup>17</sup> The Indian Jesuit Kurien Kunnumpuram claims that “the clergy-laity divide and the consequent lack of power-sharing in the Church are largely responsible for the apathy and inertia that one notices in the bulk of the laity today.”<sup>18</sup> Nazarene sociologist Kenneth E. Crow sums up: “Loyalty declines when ability to influence decision and policies declines. When institutionalization results in top-down management, one of the consequences is member apathy and withdrawal.”<sup>19</sup>

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13 Staff Review (October 1930) pp. 317-24. The reference is to 3 John 9.

14 Officer (March 1931) pp. 222-3.

15 Yves Congar, *Lay People in the Church: A Study for a Theology of Laity* (London: Bloomsbury, 1957) p. 45.

16 Miroslav Volf, *After Our Likeness: The Church in the Image of the Trinity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1998) p. 237.

17 Congar, *Lay People in the Church*, p. 47.

18 Kurien Kunnumpuram, “Beyond the Clergy-Laity Divide” (<http://www.sedos.org/english/kunnumpuram.html>) May 2000) downloaded 22 December 2000.

19 Kenneth E. Crow, “The Church of the Nazarene and O’Dea’s Dilemma of Mixed Motivation” ([www.nazarene.org/ansr/articles/crow\\_93.html](http://www.nazarene.org/ansr/articles/crow_93.html)) downloaded 30 March 2005.

Theorising can be supported by circumstantial evidence at the least. For example, Finke and Stark link the decline in the growth of Methodism in the USA in the nineteenth century with growing clericalism. "We think it instructive that Methodists began to slump at precisely the same time that their amateur clergy were replaced by professionals who claimed episcopal authority over their congregations."<sup>20</sup> A. D. Gilbert produces statistics showing how the decennial increase of membership per minister in the Wesleyan Church in Great Britain declined steadily from 93.7% in 1801 when there were 334 ministers, to 12.6% in 1911 when there were 2,478 ministers. The reasons were of course various, but Gilbert does suggest that it was partly that "maintaining themselves, their families, and their homes, tended to divert preachers from the business of itinerant evangelism still expected of them by many laymen". To that had to be added "the increasingly complex task of running a massive national association... The preachers more or less consistently displayed a willingness to accept reduced recruitment and even schism as a price for organisational consolidation under ministerial leadership."<sup>21</sup> In New Zealand the proportion of Salvationists to the general population reached a peak of 1.5% of the population in 1895 and declined slowly but steadily thereafter.<sup>22</sup> By 1926 it was 0.91% and by 1956, 0.65%. In the 2001 census, it was 0.33%.<sup>23</sup> One interpretation of these figures is to say that as the movement institutionalised, and officership clericalised, it lost momentum. This was not the only process going on, nor was there a direct cause and effect. It would be difficult to establish whether clericalisation had led to a loss of zeal, or loss of zeal had been compensated for by a growing preoccupation with status, or whether each process fed the other.

There is a paradox here: the military system, quite apart from the fact that it fitted Booth's autocratic temperament, was designed for rapid response, and is still officially justified in those terms. The Army's first period of rapid growth followed its introduction. However the concomitant burgeoning of hierarchical and bureaucratic attitudes came to exert a counter-influence. The reason for success contained the seeds of failure. The longer-term effects of autocracy and "sectarian totalitarianism" were to lose the loyalty of many of those hitherto enthusiastic, and to deter subsequent generations, more habituated to free thought and democracy, from joining.

Against this conclusion, the centuries in which the Church clericalised it grew to become a world religion – though the reasons for growth were not always related to the Gospel! The Salvation Army's growth today is in the developing world where rank and status seem more important. A host of historical, sociological and cultural, even political, factors are involved. Possibly the Salvation Army's current growth in the third world is because those societies, less individualistic, with a stronger culture of "belonging" and traditional respect for authority, are more susceptible to the attractions of firm and decisive leadership.

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20 Roger Finke and Rodney Stark, "How the Upstart Sects Won America: 1776-1850", *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* (1989) 28 (1) p. 42.

21 A. D. Gilbert, *Religion and Society*, pp. 152,3,4.

22 New Zealand WC (26 June 1965) p. 9.

23 New Zealand census figures.



Of the Western world however the period of the Army's apparent stagnation and decline has coincided broadly with its increasing accommodation to the "world", its becoming more like a mainstream denomination and its officers becoming indistinguishable from clergy. The attitudes which produce clericalisation also produce decline.

So how can the priesthood of all believers be sustained or revived in the Army? Our roots might be rediscovered in two ways.

Firstly we can encourage the kind of fresh initiative which has renewed the church in every age. Our neo-primitive Salvationists, the 614 movement, represent our own home-grown sectarian reaction to institutionalisation. The "War College" in Vancouver is a "lay"-training facility. *Allove*, in the UK, is essentially a "lay"-movement. Stephen Court's MMCCXX vision – a mission to see new outposts in 2,000 cities, in 200 countries, in 20 years, is quite independent of the Army's formal planning. Can the institution keep its hands off long enough for these to reach their potential? Can the Army give its children the independence, along with the support, necessary for them to grow up and become its adult friends? They too will clericalise, but not yet. Seldom have new patches successfully taken on old wineskins: can Protestantism learn the trick of retaining its "orders"?

Secondly, ways have to be found to rejuvenate the leather of the old wineskin, the "mainstream" Army. Historically, new movements have sometimes managed to reinvigorate at least parts of the existing church – the reformation's stimulus to the counter-reformation and the charismatic movement's 3<sup>rd</sup> wave are examples. Can neo-primitive Salvationism rub off on the rest of us?

Most commonly, an emphasis on "Servant Leadership" is recommended to mitigate the ill-effects of élitist clericalisation. However, mere exhortations to "Servant Leadership" can be used to legitimate a reality of another kind. Without structural safeguards, all talk of servanthood too easily becomes an instrument of spiritual abuse. But it is also true that servant-leader behaviour flows only from servant-leader attitudes, which have to be caught as well as taught, by the example of what Paul called "working together", by way of contrast with "ruling over".<sup>24</sup> No structural mechanisms will compensate if this heart-attitude is lacking. Attention to both may help tilt the balance towards the functional end of the status-function continuum, and foster the recovery of the priesthood of all believers among us.

To sum up, then, the "priesthood of all believers" is a way of summarising the belief that all believers have immediate access to God and that all have a part to play in the life of the church. Both of these are attenuated in the process of institutionalisation as a clerical class gains ascendancy. To the extent that the Salvation Army has followed this pattern, its spirituality and effectiveness has been affected. Like other ecclesial bodies,

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<sup>24</sup> 2 Corinthians 1:24.

the Army is challenged to find a way of ensuring that the function of leadership is not compromised by the accretion of status.

Questions arising:

1. How might fresh initiatives be encouraged and given permission while retained in association with the mainstream Salvation Army?
2. What kind of structures could ensure the successful practice of servant leadership?
3. How might servant leadership be modelled and inculcated?
4. How else might the old wineskins be renewed?

## Comrades In Arms - Germany as represented in the War Cry during the Great War

Major Harold Hill

A 1915 copy of the New Zealand *War Cry* carried a news report reprinted from *Der Driegsruf* (sic) – the German *War Cry*. An illustration showed a German in military uniform preaching to a group of soldiers, and the report was headed, “German Salvationist speaks of God’s grace to his comrades at the Front.” The Salvationist was Lieutenant Robert Treite, serving with the German army in France. On the same page a report from Switzerland mentioned that eight German officers serving in Switzerland “had been called up for service in the Fatherland”.<sup>1</sup>



### GERMAN SALVATIONIST SPEAKS OF GOD'S GRACE TO HIS COMRADES AT THE FRONT.

#### A Picture from 'Der Driegsruf'—the German 'War Cry.'

Lieutenant Robert Treite, while with the German army in France, conducted a meeting with the men, who were deeply moved. Several were sobbing and there was scarcely one down whose cheeks plainly evident tears did not run. The Colonel of the regiment

was glad the Lieutenant held the service and recommended him to do it oftener. He remarked, too, how beautiful it would be if by reason of the storm and stress of war the German people should find their way back to God.

At this time New Zealand, like other British countries, was in the grip of anti-German hysteria. Newspapers fanned the flames. The *New Zealand Herald* on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1914, for example, carried four articles under the headings: “Brutal Treatment of Refugees in Germany”, “Unspeakable German Outrages at Louvain”, “Cowardly Germans” and “Atrocities in Belgium”. Anti-German vigilante committees were formed in

<sup>1</sup> *The War Cry*, 16 January 1915, 3.

many New Zealand towns, devoted to hounding people of German descent or with German-sounding names out of their jobs and if possible, out of the country. Mrs Ida Boeufve declared to the Women's Anti-German League at a 1916 rally in Napier that "To be truly British we must be anti-German".<sup>2</sup> Even Dalmation immigrants, Serbians actually on the side of the Allies against the Central Powers in Europe, were persecuted in various ways.<sup>3</sup>

Over 300 people were interned and some were deported to Germany after the war.<sup>4</sup> Being a naturalised New Zealander and British subject was no defence, with a "Revocation of Naturalisation Act" passed in 1917. George William Edward Ernest Von Zedlitz, whose mother was English, left Germany as a child, was educated in Britain and had been a New Zealand resident and Professor of Modern Languages at Victoria University since 1902. In 1915 Parliament passed an Act especially to deprive him of this post because the University Council refused to dismiss him.<sup>5</sup>

Given this background, we might wonder at the apparently counter-cultural *War Cry* report, but there were many others like it. We might wonder whether "pub-boomers", selling the *War Cry* in hotel bars, were abused, and whether there were other repercussions. Letters to the Editors of newspapers, normally a vent for bigotry, surprisingly demonstrated no adverse reactions. The only response was that occasionally a daily newspaper reprinted one of these reports from the *War Cry*. Perhaps the Army's welfare and chaplaincy services with the troops offered some protection.

Some reports were matter-of-fact updates on what was happening in Germany. For example, in November 1914 an article on "Salvation in the German Army" recounted the experiences of German Salvationists, including Captain Soinicksen, a crew-member of the submarine U15 who survived when it was sunk by HMS Birmingham. A letter from Captain P. Schmidt, wounded while fighting as a sergeant in Alsace, described the horrors of warfare and his efforts to pray with dying soldiers. Staff-Captain Grüner, editor of *Der Kriegsruf*, had been made a regimental scribe, Ensign Claudi a medical orderly and Ensign Witzled a chaplain. Adjutant Tebbe, director of Salvationist social work in Cologne, had been appointed back to that city and given permission to carry on with that work in addition to his military duties.<sup>6</sup>

The following month, social relief work in Germany was reported on. Salvation Army Halls had been converted into relief centres and children's homes. Nearly 1,000 hungry people were being fed daily in Hamburg and there were similar programmes in other large cities. Letters from German soldiers, Heinrich Keienburg and Sergeant Ludwig, were quoted, and stories told of Sergeant Gratz and Band-Secretary H. Boldt, both

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<sup>2</sup> Andrew Francis, *To Be Truly British, We Must Be Anti-German: Enemy Aliens and the Great War Experience 1914-1919* (Toronto: Peter Lang, 2012).

<sup>3</sup> See Judith Bassett, "Colonial Justice: the treatment of Dalmations in New Zealand during the First World War", *The New Zealand Journal of History*, 33, 2 1999, 155-179.

<sup>4</sup> <http://webspaces.webring.com/people/es/somesprisonersnz/germanating/ger2.html>

<sup>5</sup> The 1915 Alien Enemy Teachers Act.

<sup>6</sup> *The War Cry*, 28 November 1914, 7.

wounded. Women Salvationists in Essen were busy knitting warm socks for the troops.<sup>7</sup> The following January the *War Cry* referred to Germany amongst other nations in a brief synopsis of Salvation Army work in the war zone, mentioning that many of its buildings were now in use as hospitals and that 100 German officers were “on the firing line”.<sup>8</sup>

An article in February 1915 claimed that despite the difficulties of the war, the “purely spiritual work in the 150 odd Corps throughout the Territory is not greatly interfered with... At Magdeburg, a hundred souls have been saved in eight weeks... A new Corps has sprung into being at Altona, near Hamburg.” A liberal response was reported to an appeal for assistance for the thousands of refugees from East Prussia arriving in the west. A War Auxiliary League had been set up to care for the wives of soldiers and women officers of the Salvation Army were assisting with this. Extracts from letters from Brother Franz Rensch of Charlottenburg (since killed in action) and Penitent-Form Sergeant Ebert of Altona were also included.<sup>9</sup> In an obituary for Staff-Captain Fuchs, formerly Divisional Commander in Hanover and a holder of the Iron Cross, killed in action near Ypres, the *War Cry* said that “The Salvation Army loses one of its most valiant German Officers”.<sup>10</sup>

Other reports were stories of “good” Germans, obviously intended to counter the picture of brutality common in the Press. General Bramwell Booth cited one such example in an article reprinted from the British *War Cry*, describing two Uhlans (German cavalry) stopping for food outside a Belgian inn. Some children were passing and one of the “grim soldiers” removed his “terrible helmet”, sat a child on his knee and kissed her. “Ah, my God, I have five of my own at home,” he said, tears running down his cheek.<sup>11</sup> The usual reports of Germans in Belgium at this time were of butchery and rape. In another article Booth quoted correspondence from Adjutant Somers (or Summers), an English officer still working in Strasburg, Alsace, in a German military hospital, describing the support she had from the German chief surgeon.<sup>12</sup> Her story was expanded upon in a later number, and reprinted in the *Otago Daily Times*.<sup>13</sup>

A 1915 issue reprinted from the British *War Cry* two stories told by “Brother Moore, of the 1<sup>st</sup> East Lancs Regiment”, recovering at home from wounds received at Ypres. In the first he described fetching water for a wounded German; in the second it was another wounded German who struggled out of his own greatcoat and flung it over a shivering, almost naked and evidently-dying British soldier at a dressing station.<sup>14</sup>

One story concerned the kindness shown by a senior German officer who also happened to be a Salvationist. This involved an Alsatian Salvation Army officer, Adjutant Muller, stationed in Paris on the outbreak of war but called up to the German forces; his wife returned to Alsace. Serving on the Eastern front, Muller asked for

<sup>7</sup> *The War Cry*, 12 December 1914, 5

<sup>8</sup> *The War Cry*, 2 January 1915, 8.

<sup>9</sup> *The War Cry*, 6 February 1915, 7.

<sup>10</sup> *The War Cry*, 28 August 1915, 2.

<sup>11</sup> *The War Cry*, 7 November 1914, 2.

<sup>12</sup> *The War Cry*, 26 December 1914, 5.

<sup>13</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 22 May 1915, 7.

<sup>14</sup> *The War Cry*, 20 February 1915, 7.

compassionate leave on hearing that one of his children had died. This was initially denied, but the General commanding his Brigade recognized Muller's name and acceded to the request. Mrs Muller then took up an appointment in Switzerland where their second child also died. Although leave to a neutral country was unheard-of, the General stood surety for his comrade and he was able to attend the funeral.<sup>15</sup>

The *War Cry* did not give the General's name but described the circumstances of his conversion in 1912 when he had mistaken the time for a lecture he planned to attend at the Circus Busche and found himself in a Salvation Army meeting being addressed by Bramwell Booth. However, his obituary, curiously appearing in the *Evening Post* many years later, identified him as a Colonel Ferdinand Peterssen, of the Prussian Guards. This gave the circumstances of his conversion. Apparently fellow-officers complained to the War Office about his membership of the Salvation Army and Kaiser William II himself responded that "he did not consider it a slight to the dignity of his Prussian officers' corps that one of its members should belong to the Salvation Army or wear the uniform of that organisation." After the war, Peterssen served as a prison chaplain at the Plotzensee penitentiary.<sup>16</sup>



Whispered in broken English, 'I also am a Salvation Soldier.'

<sup>15</sup> *The War Cry*, 3 June 1916, 3.

<sup>16</sup> *Evening Post*, 16 May 1930, 3.

Some were “human interest” stories, intended to emphasise the common humanity, and especially the common Salvationism of British and Germans. One of these was headed “Salvationists Meet in Bayonet Charge”. Salvationist John Coombs of the 1<sup>st</sup> Gloucester Regiment wrote home to his wife of the aftermath of a bayonet charge in which he found a wounded German trying to reach his water bottle. This proving empty, Coombs gave the German water from his own bottle. Seeing a Salvation Army badge on Coombs’ uniform, the German whispered, “Salvation Army; I am also a Salvation Army soldier.” And indeed he was also wearing a Salvation Army badge. Coombs carried the dying German to an ambulance and heard his last words, “Jesus, safe with Jesus”.<sup>17</sup> Incidentally, an even more poignant story was printed in several papers, although not in the *War Cry*:

A gruesome coincidence is recorded in the meeting of a German soldier who is a member of the Salvation Army and a British soldier who also belongs to the Salvation Army. The Germans were charging the British trenches with the bayonet and the German Salvationist, as he drove his bayonet into the British Salvationist, found that he had killed the man at whose house he had been a guest for some weeks during the International Congress of the Salvation Army which was held in London in May last.<sup>18</sup>

From the circumstances that sad tale must have originated from Germany. International editorial policy lay behind these *War Cry* reports, many of them reprinted from the British *War Cry* and also published in the Australian *War Cry*. Ironically, given that they founded an “Army”, the Booths were pacifists at heart. Frederick Coumts noted that “When the Salvation Army first started to use the printing press as a means of grace, one of its earliest resolves – as the first issue of the private magazine for officers [1893] bears witness – was that “No bloody war spirit, no pandering to the brutal craving for wholesale slaughter, shall pollute our pages.”<sup>19</sup> On the outbreak of the second Boer War in 1899 William Booth had written, “No matter who wins ... I lose, for there are Salvationists fighting on both sides.”<sup>20</sup> His instructions to Salvationists at that time were reprinted in the *War Cry* of August 5<sup>th</sup>, 1916:

**Pray. Pray. Pray.** Live in the spirit of intercession. Plead for a speedy termination of the horrid strife. Pray for your comrades ... on the British side, and pray also for your comrades, the Salvationists, who are on the other. ...<sup>21</sup>

Bramwell Booth made a similar appeal in 1914.<sup>22</sup> He rejected any suggestion that he should forbid Soldiers of the Salvation Army to take up arms or proclaim that all war was murder, but he equally refused to allow Salvation Army officers to enlist as combatants unless they were compelled by law to do so.<sup>23</sup> He forbade the use of the word “enemy”

<sup>17</sup> *The War Cry*, 2 January 1915, 3.

<sup>18</sup> *Wanganui Chronicle*, 11 January 1915, 6; *Dominion*, 15 January 1915, 6; *New Zealand Truth*, 3 July 1915, 3.

<sup>19</sup> Quoted in *The Officer*, June 1989, 242.

<sup>20</sup> Reprinted in *The War Cry*, 19 September 1914, 4.

<sup>21</sup> *The War Cry*, 5 August 1916, 4.

<sup>22</sup> *The War Cry*, 26 September 1914, 5.

<sup>23</sup> *The War Cry*, 7 November 1914, 2.

in Salvation Army publications and announced that “Every land is my Fatherland for all lands are my Father’s!”<sup>24</sup> Two years into the war he was able to meet with the acting-Territorial Commander for Germany, Lt. Colonel Treite, in Sweden.

Magnanimity sometimes ran both ways. A 1917 *War Cry* quoted “Professor Foerster, the famed Munich savant, in one of his recent writings on British Imperialism” reminding his readers that “England has also given to the world The Salvation Army... Remember the glorious William Booth, and all the British goodness and greatness which found expression in him!”<sup>25</sup>

The New Zealand *War Cry* was criticised by the *Maoriland Worker*, a Labour paper opposed to conscription, for an article headed, “To the Shirker”. (“Shirkers” was an abusive term for people reluctant to join the forces.) The editor of the *War Cry* responded that if the critic had read the article he would have found that it was about the war against sin and was intended to encourage Salvationists to be whole-hearted in their Salvationism, rather than “shirkers”; the reference to the actual war was only as an illustration. He pointed out that the Salvation Army was “AGAINST WAR, believing it to be of the devil. But seeing that the horror is upon us, our duty is to ... utilise our organisation to serve every combatant possible on whichever side he may be fighting, irrespective of creed; to visit the wounded of each Army, and to minister to the bereaved and suffering of every nation. The *War Cry* has carefully avoided matter and illustrations calculated to encourage the military spirit, and has only reproduced those which would call forth the best qualities in our readers, and make the abhorrence of war greater, thus making for a lasting peace.” The *Maoriland Worker* graciously printed a retraction.<sup>26</sup>

At a local level, Salvationists were not always as conciliatory in their views. A public meeting, chaired by the Divisional Commander, was called in Lyttleton to pass a resolution “That on this anniversary of the declaration of a righteous war, this meeting of the citizens of Lyttleton records its inflexible determination to continue to a victorious end the struggle in maintenance of those ideals of liberty and justice which are the solemn and sacred cause of the Allies.” “Prayers will be offered... for the success of Great Britain and her Allies.”<sup>27</sup> Of a similar meeting reported in Wellington, the *Maoriland Worker* noted that German Salvationists were no doubt praying that God would help defeat the Allies, and asked would “the *War Cry* please explain which of the two sections is right?”<sup>28</sup> Bandmaster Henry Goffin published a song to celebrate the battle between HMS New Zealand and the Blucher in the North Sea, the chorus of which ended, “They’ll sink the Kaiser’s dreadnoughts, manned by cowardly German Huns”.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Richard Collier, *The General Next to God* (London: Collins, 1965, 250; Catherine Bramwell Booth, *Bramwell Booth* (London: Rich & Cowan, 1933) 353.

<sup>25</sup> *The War Cry*, 7 July 1917, 2.

<sup>26</sup> *Maoriland Worker*, 9 January 1918, 5.

<sup>27</sup> *Press*, 4 August 1915, 10.

<sup>28</sup> *Maoriland Worker*, 19 May 1915, 4.

<sup>29</sup> Henry C. Goffin, Sheet music, “The Sailors”, published by H. Warren Kelly, price 2/- nett., and mentioned in several newspapers including the *Feilding Star*, 29 March 1916, 2; *Free Lance* 24 March 1916, 18.



There were fewer references to German Salvationists in the *War Cry* as the war progressed. In the last four months of 1914, there were eleven such articles; in 1915, a total of fourteen, and in 1916, only five. For 1917 there were no references at all, and in 1918 just three. This could have been due to the increasing difficulty of obtaining information; a 1918 article commented that “only occasionally does there come through to us tidings of the work which is being carried on by our ... comrades in Germany.”<sup>30</sup> It could also have been a concession to adverse opinion, though there is no evidence for this. It is also true that the Salvation Army apparently made no explicit effort to counteract the victimization of German nationals or people of German descent in New Zealand, though one British report described the successful efforts made by a Salvationist to have German workers, dismissed because of their nationality, reinstated in their positions.<sup>31</sup> At least by representing Germans with humanity, as fellow Christians and Salvationists, the *War Cry* did its bit to counter the inhumanity of the times.

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<sup>30</sup> *The War Cry*, 6 April 1918, 7.

<sup>31</sup> *The War Cry*, 1 August 1915, 5.

## Sacrifice in Reasonable Service

Major Harold Hill

### Two true stories

An officer accompanied his young son to school for a teacher/parent interview. The teacher suggested some project the father could do together with his son. The officer was floored when the boy asked, "Is it all right if I get someone else's father to help; mine would be too busy."

An old soldier of a country Corps died. The family went and knocked on the Quarters door. The young officer said, "Sorry, I'm on furlough. I'm not able to come." (It's OK...The family contacted the previous CO, who drove half-way across the country in order to be with them in their bereavement and conduct the funeral.)

Regarding the first story, we have in the Army a long tradition of the "better to burn out than to rust out" kind. The *Orders and Regulations* prescribed suffering as part of the officer's commitment: "The F.O. must choose not only the Salvation of Souls as the end of his existence, but that suffering, without which they cannot be saved. He embraces not only the end, but the means by which alone this end can be accomplished."<sup>1</sup> Bramwell Booth confessed in a letter that "This feeling that you are a poor sinner loaded with guilt if you stop work for ten minutes, even in a railway train, is really dreadful."<sup>2</sup> Most of us received some initial conditioning in Sunday School, when we learned to sing, "Jesus first, myself last, and others in between." Sometimes family came last, with "myself", rather than in between, with "others". So the first story rings true.

Now, looking at the second story, we have a less-trumpeted tradition of this kind too. Mrs General Bramwell Booth, when in charge of the British Territory in the 1920s, was dismayed to learn of an officer who stated that "as a Field Officer she would be in little home where she would be able to rest whenever she desired, and go to meetings occasionally."<sup>3</sup> Some might characterise that attitude as typical welfare-dependency, or perhaps a public service mentality. I don't think that's entirely fair, but I gather that senior officers today may be as frustrated as Mrs Booth at a like reluctance of some officers to be accountable to anyone but themselves for their time or for the discharge of their responsibilities.

You will gather that the particular angle of "sacrifice" I am addressing is that which concerns "the Work", as "service". Here we find these two opposite poles, workaholism and laziness – or at least such a clarity about the need for self-care that, as one church-member said of his pastor, "Unfortunately the church doesn't seem to figure in his 'core business'." Organisationally, have we swung from one to the other? Why do some people always need a rev up and others need to slow down? What causes these

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<sup>1</sup> *Orders and Regulations for Field Officers*, (London: Salvation Army, 1886) p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Catherine Bramwell Booth, *Bramwell Booth* (London: Rich & Cowan, 1932) p. 199.

<sup>3</sup> Florence Booth, *Powers of Salvation Army Officers*, (London: Salvation Army, [1928] ) p. 18.

extremes? How can we maintain a realistic balance between having no boundaries at all and erecting a Maginot Line around the Quarters?

### Sacrifices then and now

Once upon a time the sacrifices involved in serving God through the Salvation Army were fairly obvious – poverty, suffering, hardship, persecution were par for the course. You sometimes depended on charity to eat, if you collected enough for the corps expenses but not enough for your allowance as well. Riots and terms of imprisonment were left behind with the nineteenth century, but you were not too highly regarded in the community until the movement had earned a grudging respect through its social work or war service, and you might still endure some name-calling from the rowdy element and a measure of contempt from their betters. There was also the expectation of obedience to superiors, and sometimes a degree of harshness, of arbitrary unfairness, about the administration of the Movement. Of course, that would never happen now, but frustration with the organisation is nothing new. Even the loyal and saintly Brengle confided to his wife in 1912 that

I think probably most of our difficulty at present in this country arises from this multiplicity of details and the infinite red tape with which we are tied up which sap the strength and frustrate the piety of our people... To my mind it is one of the paradoxes of history how the General, with his free, large spirit which refuses to be bound by the mild rules of a Methodist conference, could have developed a system which binds men hand and foot with red tape, which is to Methodist rules what... calculus is to the multiplication table.<sup>4</sup>

Officer-recruitment in the good old days was like Churchill's famous offer to the British people in 1940; "nothing but blood, toil, tears and sweat". However, the Salvation Army officer's boat has risen with all the others on the rising tide; it's nearly forty years since officers in New Zealand were not virtually guaranteed their allowance. We have come to expect a moderately comfortable middle-class life-style. If we still maintain some of the rhetoric, the reality is a little different. And most, if not all men, think well of us.

So what are the sacrifices asked of officers today? Is there anything which might occasion *suffering*?

I suspect that most discomfort arises *internally*, from within the movement itself, both from above and from below. The officer is caught between the upper and the nether millstones, like Hopalong Cassidy in the first moving picture I ever saw. Unfortunately it was just part two of a three-part movie and I never saw the final instalment, so for me Hopalong Cassidy is forever crouching beneath the slowly descending grindstone of a bad injun's grinding mill...

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<sup>4</sup> S.L. Brengle, in letter to his wife 22 July 1912, in William Clark (ed.), *Dearest Lily: a selection of the Brengle correspondence* (London: SA, 1985) p. 112

The “lower” millstone? I suppose there have always been some Salvationist families whose staple Sunday lunchtime fare was roast officer; that won't have changed. Keeping the peace amongst our comrades in the war remains an onerous responsibility, and the energy expended dodging friendly fire is no longer available for prosecution of the war itself. Perhaps more significant is that in any people-helping role, you cannot have a more than ordinary exposure to a toxic environment of sadness and badness without risking some personal damage.

The “upper” millstone is the expectations of the organisation itself, augmented by the ever-growing burden of compliance fashioned by those who rightly seek to save us from ourselves. This is not a Salvation Army distinctive. Ask any professional person or anyone in the “people-helping” industry. Of the making of forms, all for the best of possible reasons, from Occupational Health and Safety to Statistical Returns, there is no end. Computers have not yet delivered the paperless office, and the officers no longer visit the comrades at home because they are bent over their keyboards far into the night... Mat Badger describes it as “death by paperwork”.<sup>5</sup> The end result is that we continue to kick against the pricks with renewed energy as far as accountability to the organisation is concerned.

### **Biblical perspective**

The Biblical text which most commonly springs to mind as linking the concepts of “sacrifice” and “service” is of course Romans 12:1: “Offer yourselves as a living sacrifice... which is your reasonable service”.

Here we have firstly □ the notion of sacrifice, *thusia*. Sacrifice implies costliness; we remember David saying that “I would not offer to the Lord my God that which costs me nothing.”<sup>6</sup> What is being offered as sacrifice to God is the Christian's whole self; in T.S. Eliot's words, “costing not less than everything.”<sup>7</sup> Once offered, ownership of what is sacrificed passes into the hands of God. If, as in the feast that followed a temple sacrifice, we get to share the meal, we receive it as God's gift to us, not as something we own ourselves.

Then we have Paul's play on the word “service” – *latreian* □ – meaning both cultic worship and the tasks of ordinary servitude. It embraces both the “religious” duties we may discharge, the tasks which maintain the corporate life of the church, and the necessity of doing everything else, our “secular callings”, the “trivial round, the common task”,<sup>8</sup> all in the name of the Lord Jesus.<sup>9</sup> They are all means to worship and glorify God. “Service” reminds us that our faith includes both vertical and horizontal dimensions; both heart to God and hand to man. It is a word rich in prophetic

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5 Mat Badger, “The Changing Nature of Salvation Army Officership: An Examination of the Impact of Institutionalization on the Mission of the Salvation Army”, *eJournal of Aggressive Christianity* 40 (December 2005/January 2006), on [www.armybarmy.com](http://www.armybarmy.com).

6 2 Samuel 24:24.

7 TS Eliot, from “Little Gidding”, in *Four Quartets*.

8 John Keble in SASB 668.

9 Colossians 3:17

associations, reminding us of Isaiah's warning that offerings are useless if justice is neglected, of Hosea's declaration that God requires "mercy and not sacrifice", of Jesus' own "inasmuch" parable and his warning that it is not those who merely say "Lord, Lord" who will enter the Kingdom.<sup>10</sup> This is all about "walking the talk".

Then there is the qualifier, *logikon*, "reasonable". (We'll set on one side the NIV's "spiritual service" because although the translators have their reasons, frankly, I think they're wrong. "Spiritual" conveys far too restricted an application.) So, "reasonable". What is "reasonable" in this context? □ Does he mean something like "moderation in all things... Sure, make *some* sacrifice... just don't go overboard about it..." I think not. "Intelligent worship" says Philips. "The most *sensible* way to serve God," according to the CEV. "Understanding worship" in Cranfield's phrase. Paul is not referring to "reasonableness" or "rationality" in our modern, colloquial sense, but as Cranfield puts it, to what would be "consistent with a proper understanding of the truth of God revealed in Jesus Christ." Logically, given *that* (the mercy, the grace of God), then *this!* (our whole-hearted response).

Cranfield sums up: "The intelligent understanding of worship, that is, worship which is consonant with the truth of the gospel, is indeed nothing less than the offering of one's whole self in the course of one's concrete living, in one's inward thoughts, feelings and aspirations, but also in one's words and deeds."<sup>11</sup>

Then of course that opening is followed up by Paul's injunction not to "let the world squeeze you into its mould", in J.B. Philips' memorable paraphrase, but to let God remould, transform us from within. And all of this as introduction to, and in the context of, our involvement in the Body of Christ. So although I'm taking that particular text as a springboard, I'm not intending to use it as a "proof text" on which all depends, without context, but as one directing us towards the whole grace-filled Christian life-style implied by the qualifier, "reasonable".

So what does that mean in practice; what does it involve? And how does it relate to the two poles of workaholism and hyper-self-care illustrated by my opening stories? Living for others and living for myself are both needful, but either, if not balanced by the other, is deeply dangerous. But a whiff of paradox is not uncommonly a sign that a truth lurks nearby, so let us tease it out.

"Living for others" is obviously Biblical. Paul urges that "those who live should no longer live for themselves but only for him who died and was raised to life for their sake."<sup>12</sup> He also says that "We should not please ourselves. Instead we should all please our brothers for their own good, in order to build them up in the faith."<sup>13</sup> He says that we should "look out for one another's interests, not just your own."<sup>14</sup> (Note: not "instead of

10 Isaiah 1:11-17, Hosea 6:6, Matthew 25:40, 45; Luke 6:46.

11 C.E.B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, II, p. 605 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1979).

12 2 Corinthians 5:15.

13 1 Corinthians 15:1-2.

14 Philippians 2:4.

your own".) To live by these principles, by the power of the Holy Spirit, is a needful and powerful witness to a self-centred and hedonistic society. (Though we remember that countless non-Christians also live or die for causes greater than their own pleasure or self-interest, from the care-giver for a disabled person to the suicide bomber making the ultimate sacrifice.) That side of things is pretty well covered anyway.

At the same time, what about "self-care"? Is that just "another gospel", derived from pop psychology? No string of supporting texts springs readily to mind here. Perhaps it's more a matter of inferring what kind of life-style was being enjoined by one who promised not only suffering but an "easy yoke". Who not only warned of homelessness but emphasised the need not to get stressed out about the things the Gentiles were all uptight over because "your Father knows you need that stuff". Who was sufficiently sensitive to our lack of self-love that as an update on the second-greatest commandment, "Love your neighbour as yourself", he proposed "Love one another as *I have loved you*". On a merely utilitarian level there's a case for calling self-care the wise stewardship of God's resources, but the recognition that we are *loved* takes it to another level altogether. More than anything else the thread that ran through all Jesus' teaching and example, the central truth of the Gospel, as Paul's great insight had it, was "grace". That is, the undeserved favour of God, independent of merit or earning capacity – the antithesis of Law, and of the slavery to shoulds and oughts to which we are prone. This "grace" is fundamental to, inseparable from, the "truth of the Gospel" to which Cranfield alludes. Self-care is actually integral to that perspective.

### **Addictive behaviours**

Sometimes we get a different message from that, partly because, fairly or not, Paul comes across in his letters as a classic, driven, workaholic. But chiefly because Law is the default position of humanity; and because workaholicism is one of the devil's classic imitations designed to deceive even the elect. No use having a temptation if it doesn't look a bit like the real thing; a Bangkok market Rolex looks like a Rolex until the gilt wears off. Or it stops. So: love is distorted to lust, gambling demonstrates a parody of faith, low self-esteem masquerades as humility, rescuing presents as care, co-dependence is mistaken for mutuality, hope has been displaced by expectation – workaholicism is rewarded as diligence and laziness can hide behind self-care.

So there is a connection between the rhetoric of sacrifice and the phenomenon of resistance to sacrifice in the name of self-care. Both are good things made bad by over-use. Both are addictive behaviours, at opposite ends of a continuum. Both arise from unmet needs for attention and approval, which we attempt to meet in our own ways – whether over-working or under-working – instead trusting in God to meet our needs. Like all addictions, workaholicism and laziness are characterised by selfishness and self-centredness, by the using of other people for personal ends. And both consume the one afflicted by them as well as creating a zone of toxicity, hazardous to others. They give rise to one or other of two opposite and equally adverse reactions. One is the "headless chook" syndrome, the revving out of control. The other is the reactive, "tell someone

who cares” complex, which brings the wheels to a grinding halt. Both extremes are “unreasonable”, in that both are incompatible with the gospel of grace.

Without a sacrificial commitment to God and the people, the inconsistency between what the Salvation Army claims and what I actually do as a Salvationist soon becomes destructive of my own integrity as well as a disincentive to those who might look to “imitate me as I imitate Christ”<sup>15</sup>. If I’m known as a lazy slob, hardly motivated to countersign the salary cheque if it can possibly be avoided, the word will get around quite soon. The same is true of course if what we model is unhealthily driven and obsessive behaviour. If we have within ourselves a deep and addictive need to be needed, we will run ourselves (and others) ragged, and eventually burn out. And as far as serving either the Lord or others is concerned, that soon becomes counter-productive. People are not silly; nor is God.

This is not beat-ourselves-up time. Of course we are always people of mixed motivation, and our needing to impress our peers, or to please our boss, or to placate our own sense of inferiority, may have to be acknowledged. Any blame and shame we might have taken on from family of origin or absorbed by osmosis from a shame-based society, and the perfectionism of a holiness theology gone sour, are burdens to be laid aside so that they do not get in the way as we address ourselves to the race that lies before us.<sup>16</sup>

### **The application of “reasonableness”**

Which brings me back to Paul’s key word, □□□□□□, “reasonable”; that is, “consistent with the gospel of grace”, in Cranfield’s exegesis. If you like, that is the fly-wheel on the engine of sacrifice, the weight of which not only helps keep the engine turning but also prevents it from revving out of control.

So, what would be “consistent with the gospel”, and by what means might that be secured as our “default setting”, instead of being the unattainable ideal of over-responsibility on the one hand, or a complete discarding of responsibility on the other? A proper application of “reasonable” is the answer. That is, bringing our needs to the only one who can meet them, a transforming experience of grace; a conversion from self-salvation, to trust in the love of God. Grace sets us *free from* the need to earn brownie points and *free to* get stuck into the job. And that attitudinal change can be followed up by (1) on-going, practical measures taken to ensure accountability, with appropriate supports (which are all part of being part of the Body in the world), and (2) an on-going, deepening, personal relationship with Jesus (which goes on transforming from within).

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<sup>15</sup> 1 Corinthians 11:1.

<sup>16</sup> Hebrews 12:1.

## Four Anchors From the Stern

Major Harold Hill

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### **The Salvation Army as “a Church”: a Dissuasive**

You will recall that when the ship in which Paul was sailing had come through a great storm, the sailors sounded a rising sea floor. To save the ship from drifting onto rocks in the darkness, they threw out four anchors from the stern and waited for the morning.<sup>1</sup>

I think the Salvation Army’s drift to “denominationalism” also runs onto a shoaling shore in a fog of confusing definitions and I would like to throw out four anchors from the stern. While the organisation’s mission statement has until recently described it as “an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church”, there is now a tendency for it to be described as “a world wide evangelical Christian church”. Certainly, we are *part* of the Church, members of the body of Christ. That is altogether different from being *a* church.

My four anchors are the Salvation Army’s own history, the doctrine and history of the Church, the sociology of the Church and, finally, Scripture.

### **My first anchor: the Salvation Army’s own history.**

We are familiar with the way in which the Army began as what today would be called a para-church agency, assisted by people from diverse church communities. In the manner of such bodies it eventually became an independent entity.

The change probably came about as early as 1867; Sandall calls that year “the turning point”.<sup>2</sup> In that year the East London Christian Mission was named, acquired a headquarters, hired a theatre for Sunday meetings and increased its number of “preaching stations” to six, began to hire workers (nine by the end of the year), established a system for processing converts, printed its first documents (combined articles of faith and bond of agreement), began giving social relief to the poor and issued its first financial statement. It was also the year in which many of the former supporters left and went back to their churches, replaced by new converts and other enthusiasts like James Dowdle, and the year in which members of the mission are first reported as taking the sacrament together. It was becoming an independent community of faith. We might call that “a Church”.

But they did *not* call it “a church”. They called it a “Mission”, and later on an “Army”. They also liked to call it a “Movement”; that seems a little free-flowing for anything so

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1 Acts 27:29. I borrow the title from Alan Richardson who used it for his riposte to Alec Vidler’s *Soundings* and John A.T. Robinson’s *Honest to God* in 1963.

2 Robert Sandall, *The History of The Salvation Army* (London: Nelson, 1947) Vol. 1, p. 72.



tightly organised though there was at first an element of spontaneity about it. In Maud Booth's words,

"There are sects and denominations enough. This is an Army, a band of aggressive men and women, whose work of saving and reclaiming the world must be done on entirely new lines..."<sup>3</sup>

And for a century, they stoutly resisted any notion that they might be "a church" although they were happy to be counted a *part* of the church. At the same time the Army increasingly resembled a conventional church denomination, and eventually, as we entered the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it finally, unambiguously, described itself as "a church".<sup>4</sup> Colonel Earl Robinson plotted the course of this process in his paper for the Johannesburg Theological Symposium in 2006 through a series of quotes.<sup>5</sup> Major David Noakes has helpfully summarised these as follows in his paper for the 2007 Australia and New Zealand Tri-Territorial Theological Forum:

- William and Catherine Booth: Not a church, an army.
- Bramwell Booth: Part of the Church.
- Albert Orsborn: Not a church but a permanent mission to the unconverted.
- Frederick Coutts: Not a church, but implies it.
- Clarence Wiseman: Pointed to the need for an ecclesiology, doctrine of the Church.
- 1969 *Handbook of Doctrine*: Makes direct reference to the term "ecclesia".
- Philip Needham: The Salvation Army is a true denomination and integral part of the church.
- *Salvation Story* (1998): Chapter 10: "People of God – the Doctrine of the Church".
- John Larsson (2001): A watershed had been reached in transition from a movement to a church.
- Shaw Clifton: Emphatically states the Army is a church rather than merely a part of the universal Christian Church.

All of this illustrates that we have not stood aloof from that organising principle which can be demonstrated from every part of the church and in every age: that *doctrine follows praxis*. We like to assume otherwise; that we do what we do because it is principled, or theologically sound, or God's will. Alas, whatever we do, we eventually come to sanctify it with the belief and claim that this is what God intended, even though we might originally have adopted it for quite pragmatic, or even questionable, purposes. It is called "tradition", or "the guiding hand of the Lord". It becomes inscribed on tablets of stone. It sets like concrete.

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3 Maud B. Booth, *Beneath Two Flags* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1889) p. 271.

4 *Salvation Story* (London: 1998) p. 100.

5 *Word and Deed*, Vol. 9 No. 1, November 2006 pp. 13-17, 28-31.

Of course, when other people do that, and claim for example that Jesus ordained the three-fold orders of bishops, priests and deacons, or that the Pope is infallible, well of course, that is different. From their vantage point, when we do it with the sacraments for example, well that is different too.

Now who am I to try to turn back the clock? Organisations come fitted with a ratchet clause; they don't back up. Some people are mildly scathing about those who want the Army to revert to being a Christian Mission. Well I am not urging that, but through the ages, every movement for reform and innovation has sought validation from the original Founding Vision, so here goes.

The reasons those founders resisted being a church – are they valid today? Has the wheel turned and their time come again? Here were some of their arguments:

- William Booth said, “We are not and will not be made a Church. There are plenty for anyone who wishes to join them, to vote and to rest.”<sup>6</sup> Thus he dismissed churches as characterised by democracy and a passive laity, neither of which he intended would have a place in his Army.
- Booth also spoke of not wanting strife with the churches or to be in competition with them. When interviewed by Sir Henry Lunn in 1895 on the Salvation Army position on the sacraments, Booth claimed, perhaps a little disingenuously, that “we came into this position originally by determining not to be a church. We did not wish to undertake the administration of the sacraments and thereby bring ourselves into collision with existing churches.”<sup>7</sup>
- In *Heathen England*, George Scott Railton inveighed against sectarianism as ingrown and insufficiently evangelistic:

Shall we ever sink into a sectarian spirit of selfish care about our own, and cease to spend all our strength for the good of others?” Answering the hypothetical objection, “But this is making a new denomination – a new sect,” he responded, “Well, and supposing that it is. Is there any harm in doing so? Is there not a need for just such a ‘sect’ in many cities?... But we deny that we are in any proper sense a sect... We are a corps of volunteers for Christ, organised as perfectly as we have been able to accomplish, seeking no Church status, avoiding as we would the plague every denominational rut, in order perpetually to reach more and more of those who lie outside every Church boundary.”<sup>8</sup>

- Catherine Booth also argued that the clericalised attitudes prevalent in churches meant that the unsaved were left unsaved:

“Yes, thank God, we are teaching the Churches that others besides clergymen, ministers, deacons and elders can be used for the salvation of men. The

<sup>6</sup> *Orders and Regulations for The Salvation Army* (London: SA, 1878) p. 4.

<sup>7</sup> Harold Begbie, *Life of William Booth, Founder of The Salvation Army* (London: Macmillan, 1920) I, pp. 468-9.

<sup>8</sup> George Scott Railton, *Heathen England* (London: S.W. Partridge, 2nd edn, 1878) pp. 143-4.

multitudes have too long been left to these. As a clergyman said to me the other day, 'There are 35,000 souls in my parish, what can one do?' What indeed! Set the carpenters and the washerwomen on to them, saved and filled with the Spirit!"<sup>9</sup>

The essential, underlying argument was that of "adaptation of measures" (Charles Finney and Catherine Booth), or "being all things to all men, if by any means we might win some" (Paul). The Army's target group, those Railton said "lie outside every Church boundary", the socially disenfranchised British underclass, did not relate to and never had related to the Church or churches, so the founders deliberately chose not to identify themselves in that way.

Now we can say, that was *then* and now is *now* – we have moved on. These early arguments against being a church tended to pillory inadequate kinds of church – and would be refuted and held to be no longer applicable by many evangelical churches today. (Just as some of our still-repeated arguments against the practice of the sacraments as "formalism" or dependence on external means might be denied by those practising sacramental worship today...) Despite the concern Booth expressed to Henry Lunn, we not been deterred by the thought that some churches might see us as competitors in the religious market either.

The fact is, however, that many Salvation Army corps have come to resemble the kind of churches the founders did not want their Army to be like, and many of us as Salvationists to resemble those church-members. This has come about as part of that same transition which has led us to think of ourselves as "a church."

My argument from our history then is not just that our founders did not conceive of the Army as a church because it did not appeal to the people we sought to serve and evangelise. It is firstly, that our community today in our part of the Western world, the word "church" suffers from the same disadvantage today. And secondly, that our becoming more church-like has not necessarily meant becoming more effective in our mission; sometimes, the reverse. As the Archbishop of Sydney once said to a Divisional Commander, "Mr Salvation Army, you've got it *all* going for you, you lot. Why isn't it happening?" If it isn't happening, might the founders' arguments against "churchliness" still carry some weight with us?<sup>10</sup>

## **My second anchor: the doctrine and history of the Church.**

Sometimes the claim is advanced that the Salvation Army exhibits "the marks of the church" – whether these are the traditional yardsticks of "one, holy, catholic and

<sup>9</sup> Catherine Booth, *The Salvation Army in Relation to Church & State* (London: SA, 1889) p. 75.

<sup>10</sup> Quoted by Lt. Colonel John Major, former Divisional Commander in Sydney. Have I shot my own argument in the foot with this quote? Nothing could be more churchly than the Archdiocese of Sydney and nothing more successful! However, *our* constituency is those who will not have a bar of the church. Those who *do* want church can be left safely in the hands of the Archdiocese of Sydney. What about the others? I rest my case.

apostolic”, or more involved criteria such as the no fewer than twenty adduced by Earl Robinson in the paper to which I have already made reference – and that therefore we are a church. Certainly we should exhibit the marks of the church, if we really are a part of it. Praise God we do! But these are marks of *the* church, not of *a* church. We can’t go from “these are the marks of *the* church” to “we exhibit these marks” to “therefore we are *a* church”. The syllogism is flawed. We need to define what we mean by “the Church”, “a church” and “a part of the Church”.

*Salvation Story* defines “*the* Church” as “the fellowship of all who are justified and sanctified by grace through faith in Christ.” It goes on to define “a church” as “an evangelistic body of believers who worship, fellowship, minister and are in mission together”. It affirms that “Salvationists are members of the one body of Christ. We share common ground with the universal Church while manifesting our own characteristics... [we are] one particular expression of the Church.”<sup>11</sup>

*Salvation Story’s* definitions of *the* church and a church are good as far as they go, but they do not address the question of the relationship between the two except by implication. They leave unexamined the fact that there is in practice another level of entity between the two – that of separate (even rival, competing, disagreeing) associations or families, of churches. We are on safe Biblical, theological and ecclesiological ground when we speak of a church as a local congregation and of *the* church as the whole church, but it is more difficult to justify the denominational entities except as the product of history. They are a concession to *realpolitik*, rather as Jesus spoke of Moses permitting divorce “because of your hardness of heart.”

Sometimes the view is expressed that the “real” church is spiritual, and quite independent of human, sociological structures, so it is unimportant how it is structured. The Army has never subscribed to that theory; the body of Christ is clearly incarnate and has structure and organisation. Further, the Army accepts that the Church’s unity is manifest in diversity (“with other Christian denominations and congregations”, as *Salvation Story* puts it) rather than in uniformity, and the Booths very early forbade criticism of any other body.<sup>12</sup> The difficulty lies in making this paradox work. Lack of uniformity would not be such a worry, but unhappily too often the diversity is displayed in disunity. We do not maintain the Lord’s Table, so unlike the Roman Catholics we cannot refuse any one access to it – but I do know senior officers stripped of their soldiership and rank *after their honourable retirement* for accepting ordination in “another denomination”. To adapt G.B. Shaw’s Bill Walker in *Major Barbara*, “Wot prawce unity nah?” Sometimes our actions speak louder than our words.<sup>13</sup>

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11 *Salvation Story*, pp. 100-1.

12 *Orders and Regulations for Field Officers* (London: The Salvation Army, 1886) Part XVI, Chap. I.

13 Though here’s an interesting story about Peter Cullinane, RC Bishop of Palmerston North, speaking recently to a group of priests and laity about who might receive communion from the hands of a priest. Said the Bishop, I will give communion to any Catholic in good standing and, if a Salvation Army member in uniform was to come to receive communion, I would not hesitate to offer the host.” (The context was that those who were not Catholics should not receive the host.)

Since fairly early times there have been rival factions of Christians: witness the great schisms which took place over discipline and doctrine, setting rival Donatist and Catholic, Arian and Catholic, Nestorian and Catholic, Celtic and Roman Catholic and eventually Orthodox and Roman churches squaring off against each other over the centuries. They could be compared with “denominations” in our modern sense in that they were rival associations of local churches, in some cases occupying overlapping territory and each claiming to be more correct than the other – the *true* church.

Most of what we now call denominations are a comparatively recent phenomenon; the heirs of the reformation. Although the Pope still claims that all save the Roman Catholic Church are “defective” in some respect,<sup>14</sup> these churches seldom anathematise one another today, being usually content with a slightly smug assumption of superiority. It is difficult to generalise about the origins of these groups – personal disagreements, social and national interests, theological controversies have all played a part.

In the now-ebbed high tide of ecumenism in the mid-twentieth century, it was held by many that the history of denominationalism in the church demonstrated the “scandal of disunity”, a betrayal of Jesus’ prayer “that they may all be one”. To my mind that is still is a dissuasive against it. Claiming to be a denomination consciously buys into that disunity. It attempts to sanctify that status quo. Our doctrine meekly follows our praxis.

We make no apology for not practising the sacraments. We happily swim against the tide of general church doctrine and practice in positing our own spiritualised interpretations of baptism and the Lord’s Supper, on the ground that they represent a valuable witness to the rest of the church. So why are we unable to hold the line on this, no more peculiar but equally important distinctive mark, that we are not a “denomination”? Probably because it is the line of least resistance. We resist conforming to something arguably derived from the Scripture but collude with something evolved in the era of the Enlightenment. In this we pass up the opportunity to maintain a witness to another great principle – the unity of *the* Church, a refusal to accept the divisions of the Church as final.

Obviously I am not claiming that our choice of vocabulary will heal the divisions amongst God’s people; only that this take on the doctrine of the church gives us an opportunity to bear witness to something important. Have we ever claimed more than that for our stand on the sacraments?

### **My third anchor: the sociology of the Church.**

My third anchor is the pattern of decline and renewal, repeated at intervals throughout the history of the Church. Evangelicals might explain these in terms of the waxing and waning of evangelical faith and fervour. Sociologists examine more objectively the

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14 Pope Benedict XVI, “Responses to Some Questions Regarding Certain Aspects of the Doctrine on the Church,” document issued July 10, 2007.

patterns of human behaviour, and can also help us to make some sense of the church's past.

The life-cycles of organisations, including religious ones, follow a sigmoid curve from movement to institution as they grow. They tend to plateau and enter a period of decline, from which they may or may not recover. Commonly, with the onset of decline, some schismatic or renewal movement strikes out upon a new trajectory of growth before eventually repeating the pattern.

In the Catholic Church, various orders and groups from monasticism in the second century to Opus Dei in the twentieth, as well as heretical fringe movements, have been the loci of such renewal. In Protestantism, itself such a movement in origin, sectarian groups have flourished. Such reactions against the institutionalising of the original movements seek to recover their founder's vision and validate their new departure by the past. The original theorist of sectarianism, Max Weber, referred to their adherents as "spiritual virtuosi", the athletes of spirituality. They make the rest of us feel somewhat uncomfortable. Usually the sectarian offshoots themselves institutionalise in due course – in Protestantism such groups are usually known as denominations. Sometimes, usually in response to the new offshoot, a large segment of the church experiences a measure of rejuvenation, as in the sixteenth century Counter-Reformation or with the "third wave" of the charismatic movement of the twentieth century.

Bryan Wilson summarised the characteristics of the sect as:

A voluntary association; membership is by proof to sect authorities of some claim to personal merit – such as knowledge of doctrine, affirmation of a conversion experience, or recommendation of members in good standing; exclusiveness is emphasized, and expulsion exercised against those who contravene doctrinal, moral or organisational precepts; its self-conception is of an elect, a gathered remnant, possessing special enlightenment; personal reflection is the expected standard of aspiration...; it accepts, at least as an ideal, the priesthood of all believers; there is a high level of lay participation; there is opportunity for the member spontaneously to express his commitment; the sect is hostile or indifferent to the secular society and to the state.

The Salvation Army would admit to many, though not all, of these descriptors and it can be readily seen that the movement fits this pattern in origin and development. Some sociologists have described it as a "conversionist sect"<sup>16</sup> on account of its over-riding sense of mission, or an "established sect"<sup>17</sup> because it seemed to retain many sectarian characteristics long after it might have been expected to discard them. (Real life is seldom as tidy as the sociologists prescribe.)

I find this sociological analysis helpful in trying to get a handle on what has happened and is happening to the Salvation Army. The Army, like most renewal movements, has gradually institutionalised and its leadership has become clericalised. At the same time

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15 Bryan Wilson, "An Analysis of Sect Development", *American Sociological Review* 24 (February 1959) pp. 3-15.

16 Bryan Wilson, *ibid.*, p. 5

17 B. R. Scharf, *The Sociological Study of Religion* (London: Hutchinson, 1970).

it has retained some of its sectarian character and some of its soldiers have to some degree retained, or attempted to recover, its earlier revivalist ethos. The institution has of course moved inexorably in the direction of accommodation to the world and assimilation into the generic church, both in representing its officers as “clergy” and more recently by describing itself as a “church”. So now that the wheel has turned full circle, and we have our own renewal movements, our *virtuosi*, the neo-primitive Salvationists, the 614 movement, seeking to recover the original vision.

General John Larsson, addressing a 2001 International Theology and Ethics Symposium in Winnipeg, Canada, stated that “A key question for us is how we make the transition from a movement to a church in such a way that we do not lose the original dynamic that brought the Army into being. Or if we have lost something of that dynamic, how do we regain it?”<sup>18</sup> Unfortunately “loss of original dynamic” may describe an essential difference between “movement” and “church”. Werner Stark quotes Bramwell Booth writing to Railton, “I am convinced that we must stick to our concern, and that we must also keep up its so-called extravagances. They, and they only will save it from drooping down into a sectarian nothing.”<sup>19</sup> Stark comments, “What Booth wanted was precisely what Trotsky wanted: a permanent revolution.”<sup>20</sup> Finke and Stark comment, “When successful sects are transformed into churches, that is, when their tension with the surrounding culture is greatly reduced, they soon cease to grow and eventually decline.”<sup>21</sup>

In this “watershed in its self-understanding”, as General Larsson has called it,<sup>22</sup> the Salvation Army’s leaders have a choice as to what traits in its DNA they will promote as dominant and what aspects will be relegated to the status of recessive genes. The “neo-primitive” ideals call for an emphatic rejection of clerical status and a turning away from the trap of denominational identity. Those directions offer a chimerical security, whereas the Army’s true vocation is as an egalitarian, counter-cultural movement. This sociological analysis of the Army’s role in *the church* therefore argues against its being content to be called a church.

### **My fourth anchor is Scripture.**

Are we to say that denominational diversity is quite acceptable? By what criteria is this situation to be judged? Some would argue that there is no reason to suggest that the disunity manifest in these separate denominational groups, cooperating at best and competing at worst, is contrary to God’s intention. This applies to ecclesiology the dictum of Wallenstein, “Anything not forbidden is permitted,” rather than the reverse, laid

18 Quoted in background papers to the 2006 International Theology and Ethics Symposium, Johannesburg.

19 To clarify the terms, by “sectarian” here Bramwell Booth meant what we would describe as “denominational”.

20 W. Bramwell Booth, Letter of 6 October 1874, quoted from Th.F.G. Coates, *Prophet of the Poor*, p. 98, in Werner Stark, *The Sociology of Religion* Vol. 2, *Sectarian Religion*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967) pp. 284-5.

21 Roger Finke and Rodney Stark, *The Churching of America 1776-1990* (New Brunswick NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1992) p. 148.

22 John Larson, Opening Address to the International Theology and Ethics Symposium, May 2001.

down by Calvin (and George Orwell). If our first doctrine, that Scripture is the “Divine rule of Christian faith and practice”, is to be maintained, then denominational diversity might be judged by Scripture.

Does Scripture have anything at all to say about denominational diversity? In the New Testament, the word “Church” is used in more than one sense. It meant the local community of faith, and also the whole company of those who name Jesus as Lord, wherever they might be. Early on, there were varieties of local church; Hebrew-speaking Christian synagogues and Greek-speaking ecclesia. There were churches that met in the houses of their leaders, and were named for them. Then Paul wrote to churches in various geographically scattered places. They even had local variations in pattern of government until gradually the three-fold orders of bishop, priest and deacon became general in the second century.

However, unlike so many of today’s churches, these churches recognised each others’ ministries and shared the one table. They were all *the* church. That is the New Testament, Apostolic, sub-Apostolic picture, and it persisted long after the canonical ink had dried. The only way in which the expression “a church” could be used of New Testament times is with reference to a local congregation of “the church”. The concept of some local congregations being associated in a bond that excluded some other local congregations simply would not compute. When eventually that unity fell apart in schism, they viewed that as a scandal to be resolved rather than an achievement to be celebrated.

In Scripture the solitary example of a literally denominational situation is that which Paul cites in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 1:10-17. There he condemns the division into sects claiming over against their rivals to be followers of Paul or of Apollos, of Cephas or of Christ! Paul specifically *accused* them of being, literally, “denominations”. That sounds more like a forbidding than a permitting – a binding rather than a loosing. Tested against Scripture, denominations are a confession of our sinfulness, borne with shame, to be repented of rather than aspired to. Is that what we’re so anxious to claim to be?

To offer one further Biblical reference, an analogy rather than an injunction, it seems to me that our aspiration to church identity and clerical status is like the elders of Israel begging Samuel to give them a king so that they could “be like the nations round about”.<sup>23</sup> According to at least one strand of Biblical history, that didn’t turn out too well.

Do all these arguments fly in the face of reality? All right...I admit it. There is no doubt that legally (in most countries) and sociologically we *are* “a church” in that we exhibit all the marks of a denomination. It looks like a duck, walks like a duck, quacks like a duck... so why do I still resist calling it a duck? Because I believe that names still have some power. They represent meaning. We tend to be shaped by the discourse we adopt. It’s the collective application of Proverbs 23:7: “As a man thinks in his heart, so he is.”

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23 1 Samuel 8:5.



Since I'm attempting to propose an alternative reality, what might we call that reality? General John Gowans recalls the Methodist historian Gordon Rupp saying to Salvationists in the 1960s, "You are our Franciscans. We Methodists began as a mission. We have become a Church. May the Army always remain a mission."<sup>24</sup> "Mission" may not be a term to conjure with but the evidence tabled from sociology suggests that we could make a claim to be a Protestant "order", which would be one way of defining that missional, not-a-denomination, state.

This argument has been rejected on the grounds that "order" pre-supposes a subordinate relationship with some other ecclesial body – like that to which the Salvation Army might have been reduced had the Anglican-Salvation Army talks of 1882 succeeded.<sup>25</sup> That of course is the status of most existing orders, though Taizé seems to have established itself with general acceptance in the ecclesial no-man's land between the great confessions. So how about the suggestion that the Salvation Army is an order of the *whole* Church, the catholic church, rather than of any particular denominational branch of the body? That would involve no concession of independence. That is in fact what our traditional claim to be a "part of the church" has amounted to; we've just never used that particular word to describe it. Why have we given it away? We fit the criteria exactly. Now I am not arguing that we should use the word "order" ourselves. We already have a perfectly good word, a proven "brand", to borrow the ubiquitous advertising jargon: we are an *Army*.

This is not a conservative response, a reluctance to let go of what we're used to, but a radical response, in the true sense of going back to our roots – which means back to the future. It can be dismissed as "make-believe" – except that believing does indeed make it so!

In sum then, we are an example of a revival movement which has institutionalised and settled down, finally coming to claim status as a "church", a denomination. This is seen as appropriate, an achievement, a reason to congratulate ourselves, and necessary in order to maintain and consolidate our status. I suggest otherwise. If status is what concerns us (and if so, that's a worry in itself), our claim to be an Army, a permanent mission to the unconverted, has not involved any fatal disability or disenfranchisement in the eyes of the "churches" or the community over the past hundred or more years. Safeguarding some degree of ambiguity on the question has not threatened our integrity.

So: I argue that the Army's own history, the history and doctrine of the church, the pattern of sociology, the Word of Scripture, all testify against any great need to be "a church". Our own history provides us with a clear precedent for retaining our identity without resorting to denominationalism; the history and doctrine of the church provide an ecclesiological and theological base, the sociology of religious movements provides a rationale, and Scripture provides a mandate.

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24 Quoted by Denis Hunter, *While the Light Lingers* (privately published 2005) p. 36.

25 For example, by General Clifton in *The Officer*, January-February 2007, p. 3.

In the morning the sailors cut the ropes and drove for the beach. Well, we've already done that: my dissuasive is too late. But I'm still perched in the stern, trying to yell above the wind that beached vessels do not always set sail again.

**Questions:**

1. Is this just nitpicking about words without any practical application? In what ways does this analysis not make sense? Please refute my arguments.
2. If it *were* a helpful thing to "back up" in this matter, how might the Salvation Army do that?
3. If the Salvation Army cannot, how else might it be renewed as a denomination?

## Hierarchy and Holiness

Major Harold Hill

Remember those cartoons where you are invited to *Spot the Difference*? Here's one.

### Spot the differences...



We hear of Pope Francis deserting the luxurious Papal apartments to hang out in a sort of boarding house for priests, scooting round Rome in a little old Ford Fiesta instead of using an armour-plated Mercedes, laying aside ornate vestments and handmade red shoes in favour of a simple cassock and his old scuffs. He's sending signals.

We're used to receiving and interpreting such signals. I remember in my callow youth asking the formidable Commissioner Robert A. Hoggard whether he didn't think his snazzy new 1952 Plymouth Cranbrook was a little too flash for the Salvation Army to be seen going about it? (I do not know where I got *that* idea from!)

**1952 Plymouth Cranbrook**



He replied, "Oh, no, not at all. Where I come from [USA Western territory], this is a Lieutenant's car. Commissioners drive *Cadillacs!*"

**1952 Cadillac Fleetwood "75"**



Then when I went to London in 1970 I noticed that whereas a mere Commissioner drove an Austin 1100, the Chief of the Staff drove an Austin 1800, and the General was driven about in an Austin 3 litre.



Years later in the USA Salvation Army National Archives I read the correspondence between a Territorial Commander and a Lieutenant who was threatened with dismissal and was eventually sacked because he wouldn't dispose of his Oldsmobile (I think it was), deemed *not* to be a "Lieutenant's car". I kid you not. (Perhaps there was another back-story.)

1977 Oldsmobile Cutlass



They were all signals. What these examples signalled was "hierarchy". The difficulty I found lay in reconciling those signals with Jesus' words, "That is the way the VIPs and Celebrities of this earth go on... Don't be like that!"<sup>1</sup> All this may be juvenile taking of the mickey, but what was signalled was no light matter. My subject, for which I am indebted to Caroline, is *Hierarchy* and *Holiness*. I need to talk about each in turn, and then about both together.

## Hierarchy

Firstly, we're familiar with the concept of *Hierarchy*. A pyramid, with the broad base of plebs at the bottom, rises through more restricted levels of middle-management, to the solitary splendour of the occupant of the apex. In his study of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, C.S. Lewis explains how pre-modern society was quite unambiguously and unapologetically structured hierarchically. It wasn't considered just a convenient and effective way of constructing work relationships; it was seen as inherent in nature. Lewis wrote,

Degrees of value are objectively present in the universe. Everything except God has some natural superior. The goodness, happiness and dignity of every being consists in obeying its natural superior and ruling its natural inferiors... Aristotle tells us that to rule and to be ruled are things according to nature. The soul is the natural ruler of

<sup>1</sup> Matthew 20: 25-6.

the body, the male of the female, reason of passion. Slavery is justified because some men are to other men as souls are to bodies (*Politics*, 1, 5).<sup>2</sup>

Now I'm not about to argue the anarchist or Leveller converse, that Jack's as good as his master, but need to remind you that our whole clerical system in the church derives from this hierarchical conception of reality, which we no longer take for granted today. The early church was relatively egalitarian. It had leaders but no priests. Over its first few centuries, as it institutionalised, it accommodated to traditional religious expectations, to hierarchical society and to the Roman state.<sup>3</sup> The Church took on characteristics incompatible with its founding vision of free and equal citizens in the Kingdom of Heaven (rather like Israel's earlier ideal of being a nation of kings and priests).<sup>4</sup>

When society becomes too unequal and is at risk of breaking down, Christianity seems to rediscover its roots and new groups with a greater emphasis on internal equality are formed.<sup>5</sup> Thus renewal in the Church often coincides with disruption in society as whole, or dissatisfaction of marginalised groups. Both the Christian Mission and the 614 movement started in the slums. Further, nearly all sectarian movements including and from the early church on – monasticism, the mendicant orders of friars, the Waldensians, the reformation churches and sects, the Methodists and the Pentecostals, have begun as “lay” movements, acknowledging little distinction of status between leaders and led, but nearly all have ended up controlled by priestly hierarchies, whether so called or not. The more institutionalised the body becomes, the greater degree of clericalisation and “hierarchisation” likely.

Bryan Wilson sums up:

What does appear is that the dissenting movements of Protestantism, which were lay movements, or movements which gave greater place to laymen than the traditional churches had ever conceded, pass, over the course of time, under the control of full-time religious specialists... Over time, movements which rebel against religious specialization, against clerical privilege and control, gradually come again under the control of a clerical class... Professionalism is a part of the wider social process of secular society, and so even in anti-clerical movements professionals re-emerge. Their real power, when they do re-emerge, however, is in their administrative control and the fact of their full-time involvement, and not in their liturgical functions, although these will be regarded as the activity for which their authority is legitimated.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup> C. S. Lewis, *A Preface to Paradise Lost* (London: Oxford University Press, [1942] 1960) 72-3.

<sup>3</sup> A comprehensive account of the process is found in Colin Bulley, *The Priesthood of Some Believers: Developments from the General to the Special Priesthood in Christian Literature in the First Three Centuries* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2000).

<sup>4</sup> Exodus 19:6; Revelation 1:6; 5:10.

<sup>5</sup> The egalitarian vision remained, in David Martin's terms, “a store of explosive materials capable of fissionable contact with social fragmentation” so that “schism is inevitable and rooted in the nature of Christianity itself as well as in the nature of society.” David Martin, *Reflections on Sociology and Theology* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997) 42-3.

<sup>6</sup> Bryan Wilson, *Religion in Secular Society* (London: C.A. Watts, 1966) 136.

Religious authorities usually claim some “spiritual” legitimation for their human behaviour. For example, in the church there grew up a tradition that ordination indelibly and irreversibly changes a person’s essential, ontological character, just as baptism (or conversion, in the Evangelical tradition) is believed to do. The second Vatican council stood in a tradition stretching back to Augustine of Hippo (who died almost 400 years after Jesus) when it asserted that

The common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial priesthood... differ essentially and not only in degree.<sup>7</sup>

Others deny that. Emil Brunner says that

All minister, and nowhere is to be perceived a separation or even merely a distinction between those who do and those who do not minister... There exists in the Ecclesia a universal duty and right of service, a universal readiness to serve and at the same time the greatest possible differentiation of functions.<sup>8</sup>

Nevertheless, whether we hold that clergy are essentially different from lesser mortals or we claim to believe in equality, the end result is often the same. Miroslav Volf noted that even in the contemporary unstructured house church movement:

“A strongly hierarchical, informal system of paternal relations often develops between the congregation and the charismatic delegates from the ascended Christ.”<sup>9</sup>

Whether in the Exclusive Brethren or the “Shepherding” movement, you know who is the boss. Having clerics does not necessarily involve clericalism. Not having clerics does not necessarily mean clericalism can be avoided. Office itself, formal or informal, inevitably confers power and power offers at least possibility of those who exercise it “tyrannising over those allotted to [their] care”.<sup>10</sup> (Peter was aware of the danger!)

In Walter Brueggemann’s *Prophetic Imagination*, the alternative, prophetic community of Moses is contrasted with the “royal consciousness” of Egyptian Empire. Within 250 years of the Exodus from Egypt, the establishment of Solomon’s Empire represented the rejection of that free association of Israelites and a return to structures of oppression.<sup>11</sup> In the same way, the process of institutionalisation and clericalisation in the church can be seen as a successful reconquest of the new community by the old structures of domination and power. These in turn may be subverted in due course by renewed egalitarianism.

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<sup>7</sup> “Dogmatic Constitution of the Church, Article 10” in Austin Flannery (Ed.) *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post-Conciliar Documents* (Collegeville Min: Liturgical Press, 1975) 361.

<sup>8</sup> Emil Brunner, *The Misunderstanding of the Church* (London: Lutterworth, 1953) 50.

<sup>9</sup> Miroslav Volf, *After Our Likeness: The Church in the Image of the Trinity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1998) 237.

<sup>10</sup> 1 Peter 5:3.

<sup>11</sup> Walter Brueggemann, *The Prophetic Imagination* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn 2001) 23.

My argument is that the Salvation Army's own development conforms to this general pattern. I won't rehearse tonight the steps by which this came about – you can read my book if you want the details; Salvationist Supplies still has some copies!<sup>12</sup> I'll say just one thing: The Salvation Army doesn't accept that becoming a priest or a bishop (or, officer or an officer holding "conferred-rank") alters your Christian "character", but in practice it behaves as if it did. The most recent expression of the Army's clericalisation is found in the adoption of "ordination" by General Arnold Brown in 1978. Ordination came about originally because of the Church's adoption of the concept of "ordo", the class structure of the Roman Empire. The Army doesn't endorse that, so why play dress ups?

This is not saying we need no structure. Any human society needs some form of order to avoid falling into either anarchy or tyranny. A society called into being around some founding vision requires some means of maintaining what in the church is called "apostolicity" – authenticity derived from faithfulness to a founding vision. That is part of the role of leadership, which a hierarchy can provide. The danger with leadership, however, is that rather than being merely a means of maintaining authenticity, it can come to identify itself as central to it, the means becoming the end. That is clericalisation. That is the shadow side of hierarchy.

### Holiness

Now, leaving Hierarchy for the present, what about *Holiness*? When I was growing up it was never explicitly stated but somehow assumed quite widely that holiness was a matter of personal morality, spirituality, piety and general "niceness". It tended to be regarded as a field for the spiritually athletic, the virtuosi, rather than the general run-of-the-mill Christian like me. It was an advanced degree, an honours course, to which a few went on after getting their BA, or Born Again. Wesleyan Holiness, our traditional take on the subject, has lost credibility over the years, partly through being inadequately taught. The result, to adapt G.K. Chesterton, was that rather than being tried and found too hard, it was thought too hard and not tried. Put to one side the tedious "shibboleth-sibboleth" debate about "crisis" and/or "process" aspect of Holiness – I'm not concerned with that!

Holiness has suffered, amongst other things, from an unbalanced, individualistic interpretation of the gospel. In our Evangelical tradition Salvation, which includes holiness, was about *me*, getting *me* saved and sanctified and going to heaven. When we read that holiness is "the revealing of Christ's own character in the life of the believer",<sup>13</sup> that's true, but it's not the whole truth. That's still about *me*. In western countries, that individualistic focus of our mindset was intensified in the later twentieth century under the influence of New Right economics when our whole society took a turn away from social responsibility and towards the sanctification of individual greed as the driving force of society, with the excuse that by a process of trickle-down, all boats would rise on the flood-tide of prosperity. That hasn't just changed our economic

<sup>12</sup> Harold Hill, *Leadership in the Salvation Army: a case study in clericalisation* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2006).

<sup>13</sup> Frederick Coutts, *The Splendour of Holiness* (London: Salvation Army, 1983) 41.

arrangements; it has increasingly permeated our world-view. It didn't alter our doctrine of holiness; it merely completed the total skewing of our perception of what holiness involved. That is, that it was just a matter for the individual.

We glibly dismiss the people of Jesus' day as preoccupied with his setting up an earthly Kingdom, whereas his Kingdom was "not of this world". We, with the benefit of hindsight, know so much better than they did what he was on about. Yes? No, not entirely.

If we read Jesus without our inherited spectacles of individualism, we notice that a *lot* of what he talked about was *not* about the saving and sanctifying of the individual as an end in itself but about redeeming society as a whole. He came preaching and teaching about the Kingdom of Heaven, which wasn't pie in the sky for me when I die, but the redemption of *this* world so that it would more closely resemble how God intended it to be. "Your Kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven," is what he taught us to pray. A renewed emphasis on social justice is a rediscovery of this dimension of holiness; embraced by many, while many others regard it as a distraction from the real spiritual business of saving souls.

Salvation, of which holiness is a subset, part of a continuum, is about *Shalom*: wholeness, peace, well-being, and *righteousness* – which did not mean being goody-goody two-shoes, but meant being in a *right relationship* with ourselves, with others and with God. Which is why John Wesley exclaimed, against the notion of the solitary seeking of perfection, that, "there is no holiness but *social* holiness." Christianity is a team sport, not a narcissistic individual hobby like body-building.

At the personal and interpersonal level, holiness is expressed in what William Temple described as the "true test of worship": "not whether it makes us feel better or more holy or more at peace... [but] what it does to our lives; whether it makes us more unselfish, more easy to live with, more efficient in our work." That is "becoming more like Jesus". At the macro-level, a concern for social justice is integral to a concern for personal holiness; it is making the earth more like heaven. I cannot be holy and still content that others suffer injustice. At Finney's campaign meetings 150 years ago, seekers were directed from the "Mourners' Bench", either to the table at which they could sign up to the anti-slavery campaign, or to the table at which they could sign up to work for female emancipation and women's rights. And if they were unwilling to do either, they were sent back to their seats: it was not believed that they'd made a real decision to follow Christ.

So the polarisation we frequently encounter, between "saving souls" and "serving suffering humanity", as though either one of these were more central, a loftier aim, and the other merely optional window-dressing, is a false dichotomy. As William Booth put it, there needs to be "Salvation for Both Worlds".<sup>14</sup> Birds do not fly far on one wing only.

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<sup>14</sup> William Booth, "Salvation for Both Worlds", *All the World*, 5 (January 1889) 1-6, reprinted in Andrew M. Eason and Roger J. Green (Editors), *Boundless Salvation: the shorter writings of William Booth* (New York: Peter Lang, 2012) 51-9.



If we want biblical underpinnings of this argument we need look no further than Jesus' summary of the great commandments – to love God, and to love our neighbour as ourselves.<sup>15</sup> He said the second was “like the first”; it wasn't a minor, optional extra.

### **Hierarchy and Holiness?**

Hierarchy is a way of structuring relationships; holiness is to do with the nature of those relationships. One is to do with form; the other is to do with essence. So the question needs to be asked, how holiness may be expressed in socially just relationships. Can our institutional structure, our hierarchy, facilitate loving behaviour, by all involved, so that we love all our associates, both those in authority over us and those subordinate to us, as we love ourselves? This is at the heart of the question of what holiness has to do with hierarchy.

I suggest that that the hierarchy created by clericalisation is a form which can make its imprint on the essence instead of the essence being expressed in the form. That's a very sweeping generalisation and therefore only partly true, but let's tease out the tension between hierarchy and holiness. Firstly, the hierarchical structure which clericalism has created can foster a spirit incompatible with “servanthood” Jesus modelled and taught; it can undermine relational holiness and so threaten the kind of community Jesus calls together. Secondly, by concentrating power and influence in the hands of minority, clericalisation can disempower the majority of members of Church. That can co-exist with patronising the brethren but not with loving the brethren. It can therefore diminish the Church's effectiveness in mission.

Of the first adverse effect, you could supply your own examples, but if it's any help, Bramwell Booth was aware of the danger long back. In 1894 he was complaining that “the D.O.'s [Divisional Officers] are often much more separate from their F.O.'s [Field Officers] than they ought to be. Class and caste grows with the growth of the military idea. Needs watching.”<sup>16</sup> Thirty years later he was still anxious about Divisional and Territorial leaders in that “they are open to special dangers in that they rise and grow powerful and sink into a kind of opulence...”<sup>17</sup> (Unhappily, Captains are just as prone to this as Colonels.) General Albert Orsborn acknowledged to the 1949 Commissioners' Conference that

dissatisfaction and decline... is blamed on our system of ranks, promotions, positions and differing salaries and retirements... that it has created envy and kindred evils and developed sycophancy, ingratiating, “wire-pulling”, favouritism, etc... It is a sad reflection that we are in character, in spirituality, unable to meet the strain of our own system.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Luke 10: 27.

<sup>16</sup> W. Bramwell Booth, letter of October 1894, in Catherine Bramwell Booth, *Bramwell Booth* (London: Rich & Cowan, 1932) 218.

<sup>17</sup> W. Bramwell Booth, letter to his wife, 27 April 1924, in Catherine Bramwell Booth, *Bramwell Booth*, 437.

<sup>18</sup> General Eric Wickberg, “Movements for Reform” (Address at the 1971 International Conference of Leaders) Minutes, 9.

*Koinonia* and just social relationships are difficult to maintain within that system. All of which is to say that it is in the nature of systems to get in the way of the reason they exist. If the doctrine of holiness is not lived as well as talked about, human nature will take its course, and a system which actually encourages it to do so, as ours tends to, requires extra vigilance.

And the second adverse effect, the disempowerment of the many by the exaltation of the few? The American Nazarene sociologist Kenneth E. Crow summed it up: "Loyalty declines when ability to influence decision and policies declines. When institutionalization results in top-down management, one of the consequences is member apathy and withdrawal."<sup>19</sup> Likewise the Indian Jesuit Kurien Kunnumparam claimed that "the clergy-laity divide and the consequent lack of power-sharing in the Church are largely responsible for the apathy and inertia that one notices in the bulk of the laity today."<sup>20</sup> Does our structure likewise disempower the Army's soldiery? The root of disempowerment is a lack of respect for others, and that is, again, evidence of a failure to love one's neighbour as oneself.

It would be difficult to say whether clericalisation had led to a loss of zeal, or loss of zeal had been compensated for by a growing preoccupation with status, or whether each process fed the other. There is a paradox here: the military system, quite apart from the fact that it fitted Booth's autocratic temperament, was designed for rapid response, and is still officially justified in those terms. The Army's first period of rapid growth followed its introduction. It caught the imagination for a time. However the burgeoning of hierarchical and bureaucratic attitudes came to exert a counter-influence. The reason for success contained the seeds of failure. The longer-term effect of autocracy was to lose the loyalty of many of those hitherto enthusiastic, and to deter subsequent generations, more habituated to free thought and democracy, from joining.

Clearly I'm talking about what we may loosely call the "Western" Army. In Africa and India the Army is still expanding rapidly *and* is also extremely rank-conscious! The cultures are different. I do not believe that in *our* culture, our salvation lies in the hair of the dog that bit us. Furthermore, the abuses of power already evident in the third world Army suggest that there will be a reckoning to pay there too. Faced with a flagrant example of such abuse in the past year, a Zimbabwean Salvationist wrote, "The Salvation Army now frightens me... We now know we are waging war against a Monster... Our very own church! Am now very ashamed to wear my uniform and so are many other people."<sup>21</sup> Such a reaction does not augur well for continued expansion. Unfortunately clericalism is to clergy as water to fish, wherever we live. It's so pervasive we don't recognise it, but as a soldier working at THQ once said to me, "It's in our faces all the time!"

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<sup>19</sup> Kenneth E. Crow, "The Church of the Nazarene and O'Dea's Dilemma of Mixed Motivation" ([www.nazarene.org/anst/articles/crow\\_93.html](http://www.nazarene.org/anst/articles/crow_93.html)).

<sup>20</sup> Kurien Kunnumparam, "Beyond the Clergy-Laity Divide" (<http://www.sedos.org/english/kunnumparam.html>) May 2000.

<sup>21</sup> Email in my possession.

How may the ill-effects of the hierarchical system be mitigated? That is, how may the essential holiness still be expressed through this form? Leadership is indispensable to the effectiveness of any movement; it's a given. Structure is necessary; it will happen anyway, and it needs continuity, accountability and legitimacy to mitigate the effects of unrestrained personal power. There are two ways the problem can be approached: one is structural, the other attitudinal.

In 2002 the first edition of the Salvation Army's Doctrine Council's publication, *Servants Together*, made the following suggestions for structural change:

What actions does Army administration need to take in order to facilitate servant leadership? Here are some of the important ones:

- Develop non-career-oriented leadership models.
- Dismantle as many forms of officer elitism as possible.
- Continue to find ways to expand participatory decision-making.<sup>22</sup>

I believe structural change is essential but none of us is in a position to make it, and you know it's not going to happen. In fact that whole paragraph quoted was deleted from the second, 2008, edition of *Servants Together*. And wherever else the expression "participatory decision-making" was used, that was replaced by "consultative decision-making".<sup>23</sup> Do you draw any conclusions from those excisions? Perhaps none of the structural changes suggested might have made any difference anyway.

In 1996 when Commissioner (later General) John Larsson was about to conclude his term as Territorial Commander in New Zealand, he kindly invited me to arrange the annual Executive Officers' Councils as a training seminar. With his approval I engaged Gerard La Rooy, a Heinz-Watties executive and management guru, to lead sessions on "Flatter Structures" in management. By citing awful examples from the realm of business and expressing astonishment at the laughter as the officers recognised the same scenarios as found in the Salvation Army, he led them to consider how the work might be enhanced by flattening out some operations of the hierarchy. Some "participative decision-making" might have been involved. They got as far as drawing up suggestions for change – all pretty minor but likely to improve efficiency – and nominated a working party to continue developing the theme in the coming weeks. Then it all went quiet. After some weeks I asked the Chief Secretary, Hillmon Buckingham, "What happened?" "Ah," he replied, "For the week after the Councils I had a succession of senior officers come to my office saying, 'We might have got a bit carried away with this flatter structures business... I think we should be a bit careful...'" And so we were.

<sup>22</sup> *Servants Together* (2002), 121.

<sup>23</sup> A letter to Territorial and Command leaders from the Chief of the Staff, dated 31 July 2008, stated, "...it is the General's wish that all copies of the previous edition be removed from trade department shelves, training college libraries and any other resource centres where copies may reside, and destroyed. Also, in publicizing the revised edition within your territory/command, please encourage your officers and soldiers to purchase this latest edition and to discard any copies they may have of the 2002 edition." Upon being asked about this, Commissioner Dunster wrote further that "The General's request for copies of the first edition to be discarded is simply a matter of practicality and good sense. We do not really want classes of cadets - or others - where some are using the old book and others the new one. That would lead to unnecessary confusion." Letter to Major Kingsley Sampson, dated 19 August 2008.

Even the slightest tinkering with the structure of hierarchies can produce severe symptoms of insecurity.

And the truth is that no structure can ensure that we love our neighbour – whether our senior in the command structure or our subordinate – as ourselves. That leaves our *attitudes*. The 2002 text of *Servants Together* made one other suggestion:

- Teach leaders to be servants by modelling it.<sup>24</sup>

That was also deleted from the 2008 edition. I guess it was too much like Jesus, or Paul... in a word, subversive. Too often, the mantra “Servant Leadership” is an oxymoron. Servant is as servant does. To model servanthood is the only suggestion most of us can aspire to implement, but it is also the most important. And where opportunity affords, to name and challenge its antithesis, its shadow, which is the abuse of power.

Because *power* is at the heart of the matter. Money, sex and power are said to be the three pitfalls for clergy, but the first two are usually only means to, or expression of, the third. Hans Rudi Weber wrote that “Jesus transforms the love of power into the power of love.”<sup>25</sup> Sometimes we get it the wrong way round. Power, like steroids taken by an athlete, may enhance performance but exact a long-term cost.

So the question is whether holiness, both personal holiness (which is being like Jesus) and corporate holiness (which is the application of the principles of social justice to our structural relationships, so that the Body of Christ can be like Jesus), can redeem a hierarchical institution?



Over the years the doctrine of the Trinity has been presented in such a way as to support a hierarchical conception of both God and the Church. Here is a medieval Swedish Gothic representation of the Trinity. You can see who is in charge.

<sup>24</sup> *Servants Together* (2002), 121.

<sup>25</sup> Hans-Ruedi Weber, *Power, Focus for a Biblical Theology* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1989) 167.

But there is another tradition, of what is termed the perichoretic trinity. Here is an ancient icon. Who is in charge here?

Trinity icon by Andrey Rublev, c. 1400



So, is there a way in which Hierarchy may be Holy? If so, the Hierarchy may not look like we expect. Paradox is involved. Colonel Janet Munn, being interviewed last month, spoke of the paradox in Jesus' combination of humility and boldness (by contrast with the frequently found human combination of arrogance and cowardice). She noted that "Servanthood requires humility; leadership demands boldness."<sup>26</sup> Jesus in fact deconstructed leadership along these lines: "I do not call you servants any longer, because a servant does not know what his master is doing.

Instead, I call you friends..."<sup>27</sup> Mind-blowing it may be, but he is inviting us to gather round that table. The implications for both hierarchy and holiness are worth considering.

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<sup>26</sup> You can watch it on [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_4IPSn8qAG0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_4IPSn8qAG0)

<sup>27</sup> John 15: 15.

## Worship in The Salvation Army

Major Harold Hill

*Lex orandi, lex credendi*

Attrib. Prosper of Aquitaine (5<sup>th</sup> century)

The law of prayer is the law of belief, or, as we pray, so we believe. It was long held that Salvationists, in good Wesleyan tradition, imbibed their doctrine from their Song Books. Even the reflection that most Salvationists today would more likely learn their catechism from the Data Projector continues to impress on us the significance of what takes place in public meetings. The theology inculcated may however have changed somewhat over the years. For the purposes of this exercise, by “worship” we mean what groups of Salvationists do when gathered for religious meetings.

We can distinguish three very general periods or phases in Salvation Army worship style, roughly parallel to the sociologists’ analysis of Salvation Army history – not sharply defined of course but overlapping and varying according to locality and cultural differences.

### 1. 1865 – c. 1900: The Phase of Enthusiasm

Early “private” gatherings of the Christian Mission – “cottage meetings” in private homes or conference-type gatherings in larger venues – were not extensively written about, though the pages of the *Christian Mission Magazine* might yield some indications. The participants perhaps felt no need to describe them and outsiders were not interested. We may surmise that they consisted of the usual non-conformist hymn sandwich of prayer, singing, reading and exhortation. The “Ordinances of the Methodist New Connexion”, to which William Booth would have been accustomed, provided for the following:

In the Sabbath Services the following order is usually observed: a hymn – prayer – a chant, when approved – reading the Scriptures – a second hymn – the sermon – another hymn – the concluding prayer and benediction.<sup>1</sup>

The Christian Missioners’ exercises would, in addition, have included testimony, monthly celebrations of the Lord’s Supper, and Love Feasts – the latter sometimes on the same occasion. They not uncommonly climaxed in an altar-call; an appeal for greater consecration on the part of those present, evidenced by an outward response.

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<sup>1</sup> William Baggaly, *A Digest of the Minutes, Institutes, Polity, Doctrines, Ordinances and Literature of the Methodist New Connexion* (London: Methodist New Connexion Bookroom, 1862) p. 230.

[http://books.google.co.nz/books?id=H-ICAAAAQAAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=William+Baggaly,+A+Digest+of+the+Minutes,+Institutes,+Polity,+Doctrines,+Ordinances+and+Literature+of+the+Methodist+New+Connexion&source=bl&ots=qcKaQ4OTiv&sig=O\\_bCQ6nVFH2m-pJBAPfvrBAzs-o&hl=en&ei=QSTSS475BorUtqOq8ZX-CQ&sa=X&oi=book\\_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CAYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.co.nz/books?id=H-ICAAAAQAAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=William+Baggaly,+A+Digest+of+the+Minutes,+Institutes,+Polity,+Doctrines,+Ordinances+and+Literature+of+the+Methodist+New+Connexion&source=bl&ots=qcKaQ4OTiv&sig=O_bCQ6nVFH2m-pJBAPfvrBAzs-o&hl=en&ei=QSTSS475BorUtqOq8ZX-CQ&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CAYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false)

The concluding exercise of the 1878 “War Congress”, an all-night of prayer, was described as follows:

The great object of the meeting was to address God, and it was in prayer and in receiving answers that the meeting was above all distinguished. Round the table in the great central square [concluded the report] Satan was fought and conquered, as it were visibly, by scores.

Evangelists came there, burdened with the consciousness of past failings and unfaithfulnesses, and were so filled with the power of God that they literally danced for joy. Brethren and sisters, who had hesitated to yield themselves to go forth anywhere to preach Jesus, came and were set free from every doubt and fear, and numbers, whose peculiar besetments and difficulties God alone could read, came and washed and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.<sup>2</sup>

However, most of the Mission’s early gatherings were “public”, and not for worship but for witness. The main focus of their activity was directed outwards and deliberately avoided the conventional and churchly. This activity began in the open air, in the streets, and was adapted to the class of people they were attempting to reach – the lower working class and what Karl Marx called the “lumpenproletariat” or those the sociologists term the “residuum” (a class of society that is unemployed and without privileges or opportunities) in the first instance. What they did had to grab and hold the attention of the passers-by, which meant there had to be great variety, spontaneity, inventiveness, brevity and immediacy and relevance to the people. This meant extempore prayer, singing to popular tunes and numerous and brief testimonies, given as much as possible by people of the same type as they were wanting to attract; preferably those previously known as notorious public sinners, drunkards and ne’er-do-wells, but now miraculously changed. Such people were advertised by their nom-de-guerre – the “saved railway guard” or the “converted sweep” or even the “Hallelujah doctor”, Dr Reid Morrison, aka the “Christian Mission Giant”. Any reading or speaking had to be short and punchy.

Preaching would always be “for a decision”; to bring the hearer to a point of repentance or commitment or faith, and to express that by an outward response by coming forward and kneeling in front of the congregation. To that extent, the Mercy Seat (or the drum placed on its side in the Open Air meeting) would have a sacramental role, providing the locus for the outward expression of an inward grace. Although this chapter is not the place for an examination of the principles which inform “worship” in general, it is worthwhile bearing in mind that one element in all kinds of religious worship is an attempt to recreate the original theophany, the “God moment” lying at the heart of a particular faith. So, for example, the Eucharist is intentionally a re-enactment, an anamnesis of the “Last Supper” of Jesus with his disciples, or the Temple ritual with loud trumpets and cymbals and clouds of incense was thought to recreate the scene at the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai, or the glossolalia of a Pentecostal meeting “singing in the Spirit” might recapitulate in some way the experience of Acts Chapter Two. Does the repeated

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<sup>2</sup> Robert Sandall, *History of The Salvation Army* (London: Nelson, 1947) I, 237-8.

call to the Mercy Seat or Holiness Table in the “appeal” at the conclusion of a Salvation Army meeting likewise give an opportunity for Salvationists to re-live their moments of conversion, consecration and experience of the work of the Holy Spirit? Is the test of such a meeting the degree to which this might be said to have happened?

When, after 1879, brass bands made their appearance, they were firstly for attracting attention, and secondly for drowning out the noise made by the opposition, as well as for helping to carry the singing of hymns and songs. They had the immense advantage of being in the popular working-class musical idiom. Folk-doggerel words were set to popular tunes.

All these characteristics were carried inside, whether they were inside a theatre or music hall or a bricked up railway arch or the loft over a butcher's shop. The style was modelled on the contemporary music hall, the primary place of entertainment for the lower classes. A master of ceremonies introduced a succession of short acts; speech and music alternated. Salvationists also accepted opportunities to appear as acts in genuine music hall shows – Bramwell Booth wrote of appearing on stage as “Item No. 12” at a theatre in Plymouth.<sup>3</sup>

We do not have many descriptions of how such meetings ran, but some from the Christian Mission period were recorded. Sandall says:

*The Revival* printed at this time [1868] a long description of a Sunday afternoon testimony meeting (“free-and-easy”) in the East London Theatre, contributed by Gawin Kirkham, Secretary of the Open-air Mission. The testimonies were reported in detail: The meeting commenced at three and lasted one hour and a half. During this period forty-three persons gave their experience, parts of eight hymns were sung, and prayer was offered by four persons.

Among those who testified was:

One of Mr. Booth's helpers, a genuine Yorkshireman named Dinialine, with a strong voice and a hearty manner. Testimonies were given at this meeting by “all sorts and conditions” and many were stories in brief of remarkable conversions. The report concluded:

Mr. Booth led the singing by commencing the hymns without even giving them out. But the moment he began, the bulk of the people joined heartily in them. Only one or two verses of each hymn were sung as a rule. Most of them are found in his own admirably compiled hymn book... A little boy, one of Mr. Booth's sons, gave a simple and good testimony.<sup>4</sup>

*The Nonconformist* described a Sunday evening at the Effingham Theatre in the same period:

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<sup>3</sup> W. Bramwell Booth, *These Fifty Years* (London: Cassell, 1929) 193.

<sup>4</sup> Sandall, *History I*, 114-5.



The labouring people and the roughs have it – much to their satisfaction – all to themselves. It is astonishing how quiet they are.

There is no one except a stray official to keep order; yet there are nearly two thousand persons belonging to the lowest and least educated classes behaving in a manner which would reflect the highest credit upon the most respectable congregation that ever attended a regular place of worship.

“There is a better world, they say” was sung with intensity and vigour . . . everybody seemed to be joining in the singing. The lines  
“We may be cleansed from every stain,  
We may be crowned with bliss again,  
And in that land of pleasure reign!”

were reached with a vigour almost pathetic in the emphasis bestowed upon them. As they reluctantly resumed their seats a happier expression seemed to light up the broad area of pale and careworn features, which were turned with urgent, longing gaze towards the preacher.

Mr. Booth employed very simple language in his comments ... frequently repeated the same sentence several times as if he was afraid his hearers would forget. It was curious to note the intense, almost painful degree of eagerness with which every sentence of the speaker was listened to. The crowd seemed fearful of losing even a word.

It was a wonderful influence, that possessed by the preacher over his hearers. Very unconventional in style, no doubt . . . but it did enable him to reach the hearts of hundreds of those for whom prison and the convicts’ settlement have no terrors, of whom even the police stand in fear. . . . The preacher has to do with rough and ready minds upon which subtleties and refined discourse would be lost. . . . He implored them, first, to leave their sins, second, to leave them at once, that night, and third, to come to Christ. Not a word was uttered by him that could be misconstrued; not a doctrine was propounded that was beyond the comprehension of those to whom it was addressed.

There was no sign of impatience during the sermon. There was too much dramatic action, too much anecdotal matter to admit of its being considered dull, and when it terminated scarcely a person left his seat, indeed some appeared, to consider it too short, although the discourse had occupied fully an hour in its delivery.<sup>5</sup>

Clearly, William Booth was not himself restricted by the rule that any speaking should be brief, but then again most Victorian sermons were likely to be of this length or even greater.

What grew up by trial and error as the most practical way to proceed became in due course the standard as prescribed by regulation. The first *Orders and Regulations* (1878), largely drafted by Railton, directed as follows:

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<sup>5</sup> Sandall, *History I*, 77-8.

Be sure to keep up from the first that perfect ease and freedom as to the form of service which always belongs to us.

Drive out of the place within the first five minutes the notion that there is to be anything like an ordinary religious service. A few free and hearty remarks to your helpers, or to persons just entering the building, whom you wish to come forward, such as a *loud* "God bless you, brother; I'm glad to see you," will answer this purpose, astound Christians, and make all the common people feel at home as much as when they enter the same place amidst the laughter and cheers of weekdays.<sup>6</sup>

The *Orders and Regulations* also provided a description of the meetings and activities of the Corps as they would appear to a stranger arriving in the town, thereby providing the officer with a template. Extracts convey the flavour:

14. About a quarter to eight he would observe a procession marching along, which as it passed would be joined by several companies.

15. On nearing the hall he would see another procession of equal size approaching from the opposite direction, and both would meet in the presence of a huge mob at the doors.

16. Two strong men would be seen keeping the entrance with smiling faces; but with the most resolute silent determination to keep back the turbulent, and welcome only the well-intentioned.

17. Upon the front he would observe very large placards, "The Salvation Barracks" being prominent above all.

18. The building would be entered through large gates into a yard, and would turn out to be a plain white-washed room on the ground floor, capable of seating—on low unbacked benches—some thousand people.

19. Upon entering he would find a large number of men present, many of them of a very low description, and a general buzz of conversation prevalent. He would be received at the door by a man who would smilingly show him to a seat. Another would offer him a songbook for Id.

20. At one side of the place he would notice a platform, some two feet high, capable of seating from 50 to 100 people.

21. He would notice the men as they came in from the open air disperse, some sitting at the end of forms, some in seats at the front, and some on the platform.

22. He would hear one standing at the front of the platform call out a number, and upon this, order would generally prevail. But some young men at one side would laugh and make remarks to one another.

The leader turning upon them, would caution them to be quiet. One of them would reply in a saucy manner—another would laugh aloud.

They would then be told they must leave the place, and the first verse of a hymn not given would be started. One of the men seated at the end of a form near would then

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<sup>6</sup> *Orders and Regulations for The Salvation Army* (London: The Salvation Army, 1878) 54-5.

request these two to go out, and upon their refusal would turn towards a man at the door, who would at once come up with three others and the two would be dragged out before the end of the chorus several times repeated. As they were pushed out two of the men would remain at the door to assist in keeping them out, if necessary.

23. The second verse would be given out with an extraordinary remark, and the singing would be of the loudest and wildest description, the chorus repeated many times, but always led off by the leader.

In the course of singing the next verse many shouts would be heard, and some would stand on forms and wave their arms.

24. After this, all would suddenly kneel down and at once there would be a burst of prayer from one after another, till in a few minutes six or eight had prayed.

25. Another hymn would then be at once struck up by the leader, and whilst it was being sung a very large number of persons kept outside during prayer would stream into the room, making it nearly full...

26. The leader would then announce an extraordinary list of speakers, and strike up a verse while they came forward. Each speaker would occupy a few minutes only, eight or nine being heard in the hour.

27. A lad would sing a solo between two of the speeches, and one speaker would announce, amidst many shouts, that he had never spoken before, but meant to do so again.

28. An old woman rising near the front would ask for a word, would be welcomed by the leader, and would then speak in such a way as to move all present to tears.

29. Encouraged by this, a big man, wearing rather flash clothes, would rise and ask a word, but would be informed there was not time tonight by the leader, who would instantly strike up a verse.

30. About the middle of the hour notices of the services of Sunday and Monday would be given out, and everyone urged to buy and read on Sunday some publications, to be had at the door.

31. The leader would then speak after the rest, urging everyone unconverted at once to come forward and seek Christ, and would then call for silent prayer, after a minute or two of which, prayer aloud would begin.

32. The stranger would now rise to leave; but would at once be spoken to by someone who would walk towards the door with him, urging him not to go. He would notice facing him near the door a motto of the most terrible description, others being placed on each wall and along the front of the platform...<sup>7</sup>

That was Saturday night – the hypothetical visitor returned and got saved on Sunday.

This prescription is not unlike the description of the Christian Mission meeting of ten or so years earlier, except that huge crowds are envisaged and provided for, and an immense amount of organisation assumed. In some places, that was what it was like. And when Booth insisted that people “do mission work on mission lines, or move off”, this is what he meant.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> *Orders and Regulations for The Salvation Army* (London: The Salvation Army, 1878) 112-114.

<sup>8</sup> Catherine Bramwell Booth, *Bramwell Booth* (London: Rich & Cowan, 1932) 90.

A reporter from *The Secular Review* attended an Army meeting at the People's Hall, Whitechapel in 1879. A selection of quotes from his article gives an impression of the people and practices of the early Army:

The congregation is evidently drawn from the poorer classes, with here and there a young man or woman who may be slightly superior in point of what the world calls respectability...

These Salvationists are in earnest - plain, vulgar, downright, most unfashionably earnest...

The service begins with a hymn sung to the air of 'Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon'. As the hymn proceeds and the oft-repeated chorus gathers strength, arms and hands are raised to beat time with the singing...

And now comes a prayer... and we are compelled to acknowledge that it is an able one. It moves the hearers' sympathy. Its eucharistic cries arouse... cries of 'Amen!', 'Glory!', 'Hallelujah!' from all around.

As for the preacher, Peter Keen, the reporter noted, "He is natural, and undoubtedly is firmly convinced of the truth of the gospel which he declares. With a rude, untutored, but withal moving eloquence, he preaches a sermon upon the inability of man to do aught for himself, and the consequent necessity of 'throwing it all upon Jesus'..."<sup>9</sup>

The 1881 *Doctrines and Discipline of The Salvation Army* urged lively and attractive meetings:

#### SECTION 32.—THE DUTY OF AN OFFICER.

##### 1. What do you say is the work of an Officer in The Salvation Army?

To make everybody within the circle of his command hear, and think, and submit to the claims of God, so far as possible.

##### 2. What measures is he to employ for this?

He must not only use all the measures employed by his predecessor that are wise and suitable, but he must be constantly inventing new ones.

##### 3. What should be one of the most important characteristics of his measures?

ATTRACTIVENESS. They must be interesting—and attractive and interesting to the class he wants to get hold of.

##### 4. What will make them attractive?

They must be LIVELY. Nothing can be put in the place of life. "A living dog is better than a dead lion." Anything will be pardoned by the mob rather than dulness! The respectabilities and proprieties will some of them pay to be put to sleep, but the unwashed and unshaven will quickly make off and come there no more until assured of an entire change in the performance.

I. This means short, sharp speaking, full of facts and illustrations, plenty of attitude; your mouth well open, and the words well spoken up.

II. This means plenty of lively, sharp singing, to plaintive or merry tunes; none better than song tunes, because they are always made expressly to meet the

taste of the crowd, and only those who hit that taste survive. Catch those and use them.

III. This means plenty of music. Music always means life and interest, and never loses its charm.

IV. This means novelty!—something perpetually new and fresh.

Change about. Oh, how some go round and round—too lazy, or not enough sense to do something different, until everybody, the devil included, know exactly what is coming from first to last.

V. Use all your talent. That is, all your people—every soul of them, down to the charwoman saved only last night—men and women, and children.

VI. Borrow and lend with other Stations. Have them singly or have them in groups.

VII. You can use local preachers or ministers, if they will condescend to be used in this way, on the band system. That is, putting them in with the groups—short and sharp like the rest—to be stopped if the interest flags, or the people stare about and gape, and get up and go out; because you cannot allow going out, if it can be helped, till the time to go. Too much trouble to get them in, to be allowed to go out.

##### 5. What is the second, and equally important characteristic of an Officer's measures?

RELIGIOUSNESS. There must be nothing that would not be in perfect harmony and agreement with the feelings of Jesus Christ, if he were personally with you in the flesh. For, verily, he will be with you from the beginning to the end of the meeting, if your service is not a "sounding brass and tinkling cymbal" piece of business. Never practice nor allow tomfoolery.

##### 6. What is the third characteristic of successful measures?

EFFECTIVENESS. Something done! Results! Some-

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.ourchurch.com/view/?pageID=12278> downloaded 21.01.14.

<sup>10</sup> *The Doctrines and Discipline of The Salvation Army* (London: The Salvation Army, 1881) Section 32.

Various types of Meetings were prescribed. Apart from prayer meetings (Knee-drill) there were open-air meetings at various times of the day, the main purpose of which, apart from bearing witness and challenging people to be converted on the spot, was to persuade the public to follow the Salvationist back to their Barracks for the in-door meeting. There were generally public indoor gatherings in the afternoon and evening on Sundays, and on every night of the week.

At first it was not usual to have indoor meetings on Sunday mornings. These were the time the working class idled about in the streets, drinking and gossiping and wasting their free time. Therefore, non-stop open-air meetings were to be conducted at this time. Later, when morning indoor meetings came to be held, these were at first attended by small numbers, usually only Salvationists, and used for teaching, especially about Holiness. However, it was not expected that all Salvationist would attend, because the soldiers, in their brigades or companies, would take turns away from their own inside meeting to work in the open air.

The “Holiness Meeting” was at first usually a week night event, for soldiers only, with strictly controlled admission by token or pass. The style would be more restrained, there being no need to entertain the masses; those attending were there because they were serious about their religion. Singing, praying and testifying to “the Blessing” would precede the sermon. Later, the Sunday morning meeting became known as the Holiness Meeting and was attended mainly by Salvationists. There was always a challenge to seek the Blessing of Holiness, and an invitation to come forward to pray for this.

The outline of the meeting for the “saints” was therefore the same as that for “sinners”: all was focussed towards the climacteric appeal. This might be contrasted, for example, with the Anglican liturgy where a general confession and absolution fairly early in the order of events relieves the worshippers of any burden of guilt and sets them free to enjoy the rest of the service. In the Army’s meeting plan, any guilt is relentlessly pursued – sung, prayed and preached towards the appeal, heightening the participant’s anxiety in order to ensure their capitulation at the end. Those not making the cut may take their guilt home with them to ensure their return.

On the Sunday afternoon there was a “free-and-easy” meeting, like a music hall concert. Both soldiers and the public attended, and the opportunity to preach and testify was not neglected. There was always a challenge to conversion. There was a church fashion for PSA – “Pleasant Sunday Afternoons” – at this time, but they tended to be lecture-based. The Army’s were different, and more focussed. At night was the “Salvation Meeting”, when the largest numbers of the public would attend, and all the stops would be pulled out in the battle for converts.

The arrangement of the Barracks followed the lay-out of the music hall and such places, with a stage for the performers. As the number of soldiers grew, and the Army built or bought its own halls, the platform was often tiered; the soldiers sat on the tiers and the public gathered in the body of the Hall. Only later, as the crowds thinned towards the

end of the century, did the soldiers start to fill up the hall itself, and the musicians come to occupy the stage. Booth was insistent that the musicians were there for support purposes, not to be seen or heard for their own sake. He was very reluctant to have singing groups as such – his experience as a Methodist minister had left him believing “choirs to be possessed of three devils: the quarrelling devil, the dressing devil and the courting devil.”<sup>11</sup> It was some years before “Songster Brigades” were tolerated. Booth preferred the “Singing, Speaking and Praying” Brigades initiated by his son Herbert, the members being equally willing and able for any of those assignments.

While Booth’s prescription in the *Orders and Regulations* suggests and assumes a very tightly controlled and directed performance, all under the orders of one person, in practice the early Army’s spontaneity was at odds with this picture, owing more to the revivalist camp-meeting. Lillian Taiz quotes the memoirs of Salvationist James Price:

One Saturday night during the ‘Hallelujah wind-up’ he nearly passed out. “I seemed to be lifted out of myself,” he said, “and I think that for a time my spirit left my body.” While he did not faint, “mentally, for a time I was not at home.” When he regained awareness, he found himself “on the platform among many others singing and praising God.” “[S]uddenly finding myself in the midst of a brotherhood with whom I was in complete accord; without the shadow of a doubt regarding its divine mission, and then the great meetings climaxing in scores being converted, all this affected me like wine going to my head.”<sup>12</sup>

Taiz also quotes the *National Baptist’s* description of a Salvation Army meeting:

Many of the soldiers rock[ed] themselves backwards and forwards waving and clapping their hands, sometimes bowing far forward and again lifting their ... faces, heavenward. The singing was thickly interlarded with ejaculations, shouts [and] sobs.<sup>13</sup>

Taiz’s comment is that “Salvationists had created an urban working-class version of the frontier camp-meeting style of religious expression.”

All religious revivals produce their own hymnology. The Christian Mission used mainly the great Wesleyan hymns Booth and some of his supporters brought from Methodism – and they had often been set to the popular song tunes of the previous century. Many of what today we hear as “great hymns of the Church” were set to tunes sung in the pubs in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Many of these have been carried forward into the Army’s modern repertoire. Before long, however, the Army was producing its own doggerel – and much of it was that. It tended to be set to the music hall tunes and popular songs of the day, such as “Champagne Charlie”. In the words of John Cleary, “the early Salvation Army captured, cannibalised and redeemed the popular forms of the day, and filled

<sup>11</sup> Sandall, *History* 1, 209.

<sup>12</sup> Lillian Taiz, *Hallelujah Lads & Lasses: Remaking the Salvation Army in America 1880-1930* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2001) 76, quoting James W. Price, “Random Reminiscences,” 1889-99, 78, RG 20.27, SA Archives (USA).

<sup>13</sup> Taiz, *Hallelujah Lads*, 77, citing the London *War Cry*, 10 July 1880, 4.

them with messages that spoke of the love of God for ordinary people and the power of God to change the world.”<sup>14</sup> “Penny Song Books” were sold at the meetings. The *War Cry* ran song-writing competitions and printed the results. The *War Cry* was also sold to the congregation so that they could sing the new songs produced that week. Because many people could not read, the leader outlined the words of each verse before they were sung. Many of the songs had choruses, so that the congregations could pick up the repetitive refrains and join in – as had long been the custom in the pubs with popular songs as well. The Officers were instructed:

Remember that the people do not know any tunes except popular song tunes and some tunes commonly sung in Sunday Schools, and that unless they sing, the singing will be poor and will not interest them much...

Choose, therefore, hymns and tunes which are known well, and sing them in such a way as to secure the largest number of singers and the best singing you can...<sup>15</sup>

John Rhemick in his *A New People of God* explores the significance of the Army’s “dramatic expression” as a means of reaching working class people. What a more cultured critic chose to call the Army’s “coarse, slangy, semi-ludicrous language” was what reached its target, and popular music provided the right vehicle for such language.<sup>16</sup> Paul Alexander, writing on Pentecostal worship, quotes Tex Sample on how “Pentecostal worship is an expression of working-class taste because it is in direct contrast to how ‘elitist taste legitimises social inequality’.”<sup>17</sup> The early Army’s music was the 19<sup>th</sup> century equivalent of such religious expression.

The style and subject matter of the Army’s songs majored on personal religion; the experience of the individual and appeals to the individual. “I” and “we” have experienced this; “You” need to. In the words of Cleary again, the “lyrics were critically linked to evangelism. Songs for worship were also songs that spoke to the lost and broken. There were not songs for the elect body of believers but for the whole lost world for whom Jesus came.”<sup>18</sup> Many of the new songs did not last the distance; we no longer hear

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<sup>14</sup> John Cleary, “Salvationist Worship – A Historical Perspective”, in *Journal of Aggressive Christianity*, 42, April-May 2006, 2. Online: [http://www.armybarmy.com/pdf/JAC\\_Issue\\_042.pdf](http://www.armybarmy.com/pdf/JAC_Issue_042.pdf), downloaded 03 April 2006.

<sup>15</sup> *Orders and Regulations for The Salvation Army* (London: The Salvation Army, 1878) 53-4.

<sup>16</sup> John Rhemick, *A New People of God: A Study in Salvationism* (The Salvation Army: Des Plaines Ill, 1993) 167.

<sup>17</sup> Tex Sample, *White Soul: Country Music, the Church and Working Americans* (Nashville Tenn: Abingdon, 1996) 76, quoted in Paul Alexander, *Signs and Wonders* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009) 32.

<sup>18</sup> Cleary, “Salvationist Worship...” 2.

20

Tune 168, Vol. I.

**W**E shall see the Judge descending,  
On that great day,  
While the heavenly music  
Sounds sweetly through the air.

- 2 We shall hear the thunder rolling.
- 3 We shall see the Saviour coming.
- 4 We shall see our parents coming.
- 5 We shall see our children coming.
- 6 Then repentance will be useless.
- 7 For there will be no pardon.
- 8 Oh, you'll wish you'd been converted.
- 9 Oh, you'll wish you'd been a soldier.

19

Or

Tune 97, Vol. I. B.J., 54, 106.

**H**ELL is darkness—deep and awful;  
Turn, poor sinner! turn and flee!  
Heaven is light—all bright and joyful,  
And its light may shine on thee.

Turn to the Lord and seek salvation!  
Sound the praise of Jesus' name!  
Glory, honour, and salvation—  
Christ the Lord is come to reign!

- 2 Hell is fire—for ever burning;  
Turn, poor sinner; turn and flee!  
Mercy waits for thy returning,  
With a pardon full and free.
- 3 Hear the voice of Jesus pleading,  
“Turn, poor sinner; turn and flee!  
See the Man of Sorrows bleeding,  
Dying on the cursed tree.
- 4 “It is finished!” Christ is risen;  
Turn, poor sinner; turn and flee!  
Though the Spirit long has striven,  
He'll not always strive with thee.

A number seemed to celebrate The Salvation Army itself. On the other hand, many Army classics by notables like Herbert Booth, George Scott Railton, Charles Coller, William Pearson, Richard Slater, Thomas Mundell, and Sidney Cox enriched the Army's continuing repertoire. In his memoirs, Bramwell Booth paid particular tribute to his brother.

Among the men who stand out prominently as makers of Army music I must put in first position my brother, Herbert. He, a natural musician... first originated that kind of music which I may call peculiarly ours. It is right that he should have special recognition for the

<sup>19</sup> *The Salvation Soldiers' Song Book*, Colony Headquarters, New Zealand. (Undated, but with the name of Brigadier Hoskin, who was Colony Commander 1895-98, on the back cover.)



great work he did. He was the creator of melodies which are now known throughout the world, both within and outside the Army... His melodies stand unrivalled in their suitability to Army meetings, and they have earned undying popularity...<sup>20</sup>

Such a recommendation is borne out by the retention of no fewer than 22 of Herbert Booth's songs in the 1986 Song Book, including the following:

The salvation soldier

713

Blessèd Lord, 410; Helmsley, 417  
8.7.8.7.8.7. Troch.

BLESSÈD Lord, in thee is refuge,  
Safety for my trembling soul,  
Power to lift my head when drooping  
'Midst the angry billows' roll.  
I will trust thee,  
All my life thou shalt control.

- 2 In the past too unbelieving  
'Midst the tempest I have been,  
And my heart has slowly trusted  
What my eyes have never seen.  
Blessèd Jesus,  
Teach me on thy arm to lean.
- 3 O for trust that brings the triumph  
When defeat seems strangely near!  
O for faith that changes fighting  
Into victory's ringing cheer;  
Faith triumphant,  
Knowing not defeat or fear!

*Herbert Howard Booth (1862-1926)*

The following, written by George Ewens in 1880 and first published in *The War Cry* in June 1881, also still appeared in the 1986 *Song Book*:

79

*Tune 9, Vol. II. B.J., 34.*

**I**F you want pardon, if you want peace,  
If you want sighing and sorrow to cease,  
Look up to Jesus who died on the tree  
To purchase a full salvation.

Living beneath the shade of the Cross,  
Counting the jewels of earth but dross;  
Cleansed in the blood that flows from His side—  
Enjoying a full salvation.

- 2 If you want Jesus to reign in your soul,  
Plunge in the fountain, and you shall be whole;  
Washed in the blood of the Crucified One,  
Enjoying a full salvation.
- 3 If you want boldness, take part in the fight;  
If you want purity, walk in the light;  
If you want liberty, shout and be free,  
Enjoying a full salvation.
- 4 If you want holiness, cling to the Cross,  
Counting the riches of earth as dross;  
Down at His feet you'll be wealthy and wise—  
Enjoying a full salvation.

<sup>20</sup> Bramwell Booth, *These Fifty Years*, 229-30.

At the same time the older Evangelical and Wesleyan tradition continued alongside the newer Salvationist style, the book containing old favourites by people like Fanny Crosby, Richard Jukes, William Collyer, Henry Alford, and especially by Charles Wesley. Such writers perhaps provided material more suitable for the Holiness meetings, perhaps more worshipful, although the subject matter was less often the attributes of God than it was the personal spiritual life and struggles of the worshippers. The emphasis was on joy, triumph and challenge. Booth admitted in 1904:

I think sometimes that The Salvation Army comes short in the matter of worship. I do not think that there is amongst us so much praising God for the wonders He has wrought, so much blessing Him for His every kindness, or so much adoration of His wisdom, power and love as there might, nay, as there ought to be. You will not find too much worship in our public meetings, in our more private gatherings, or in our secret heart experiences. We do not know too much of

“The sacred awe that dares not move,  
And all the inward Heaven of love.”

... worship means more than either realisation, appreciation, gratitude or praise; it means adoration. The highest, noblest emotion of which the soul is capable. Love worships.<sup>21</sup>

Perhaps the old man was becoming nostalgic for the Wesleyan worship of his youth.

## **2. c. 1900 – c. 1980: The Phase of Routinisation and Institutionalisation**

The tendency of revival movements is to see themselves as recreating the original purity of the church. The Army did not set out to do this – Booth was simply pragmatic – but it came to believe this is what had happened. A 1921 article claimed:

The Salvation Army is, in a word, the modern manifestation of Apostolic religion. For the first 200 years after the death of Jesus, the Christian Assemblies were very like Salvation Army meetings. The reading of the Prophets or the Psalms, and copies of the manuscripts of the Gospels or Pauline letters, extempore prayers, testimonies – in which the women shared – and, speaking generally, unconventional as against a set form of service.<sup>22</sup>

Ironically, by then the unconventional was setting in the mould of its own conventions. By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century the Army's first great age of expansion and excitement was over; it was settling down. The period of routinisation began. If the history of the Church alternates between the “priestly” tradition, which seeks to secure continuity of an

<sup>21</sup> William Booth, “The Spirit of Burning Love” in *International Congress Addresses, 1904* (London: The Salvation Army, 1904) 139-40.

<sup>22</sup> “Torchbearer”, “The Salvation Army and Sacerdotalism”, *The Salvation Army Year Book*, 1921, 22.

established pattern, and the “prophetic” tradition, which seeks to regain the original impetus and spirit which had created that pattern, at this stage the priestly tradition was re-asserting its dominance.

Lillian Taiz has examined the change in the Salvation Army culture in the United States, but her findings are equally applicable to the Army in Britain and the old “white” Commonwealth countries. Firstly (seeing that, in the words of the old song, “In the open air, we our Army prepare”<sup>23</sup>), Taiz remarks on the way “at the beginning of the century the Army started to ritualize its expressive and spontaneous street meetings by institutionalizing them and creating carefully scripted performances.” This change is illustrated from the Men’s Training Garrison curriculum described in the American *War Cry* of 14 March 1896. By this time Joe the Turk’s confrontational antics had become an embarrassment to the high command, which tried to discourage officers from courting imprisonment and “martyrdom”, and urged compromise and accommodation with local authorities. (And Taiz notes that by-mid-century “Salvationists had largely abandoned their ‘open-air heritage’ and no longer performed their spirituality in the streets.”)<sup>24</sup>

Taiz’s main point however concerns the Army’s adaptation to changing culture – both that within which it operated and that found within its own ranks. The spread of middle-class gentility affected what the donating public would tolerate from the Army, and what the gentrifying second-generation Salvationists would tolerate amongst themselves. While earlier Salvationists justified their extreme “uncouth, noisy and disagreeable” informality on the grounds that such methods were necessary to reach the masses, by the turn of the century the leadership “took steps to improve the organisations public image by discouraging noisy, confrontational public performances while at the same time providing the public with alternative images of Salvation Army religious culture.”<sup>25</sup> The same was true of the Army’s homeland; it was no accident that perceptions of its new-found decorum and professionalism in Saki’s short story were associated with Laura Kettleway’s references to the Army’s good works of social reformation – respectability was important for fund-raising! Taiz draws attention to the influence of the increasingly important social operations on the change in the Army’s internal religious culture. “The social work champions soon realized... that in a world that enshrined gentility as a standard for public and private behaviour, the organization could no longer afford to foster its own marginalization if it meant to achieve its goals.”

The Army’s regular congregation was by now composed largely of Salvationists and regular attendees. The style of meeting began to change, transmuting from a variety show back into the typical nonconformist hymn-sandwich, but with more fillings, or “items” incorporated because the musical sections had to have their turn. Regulations give a clue: there was one restricting the band to playing only for the first song in the Holiness Meeting, because they were beginning to assert their concert role and play to be noticed. That regulation was not long in being ignored. Extempore prayer suffered

<sup>23</sup> From Fanny Crosby’s 1867 hymn, readily adapted by the Army in its 1878 Song Book.

<sup>24</sup> Lillian Taiz, *Hallelujah Lads & Lasses: Remaking the Salvation Army in America, 1880-1930* (Chapel Hill NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2001) 142.

<sup>25</sup> Taiz, *Hallelujah Lads*, 145.

the stereotyping of word and phrase that accompanies a lack of preparation. Taiz quotes a Californian thesis to the effect that “services took on a “traditional ritual and form... consist[ing] of a call to worship, some offertory, band and songster special numbers, and a message followed by an alter [sic] call.”<sup>26</sup>

Taiz perceptively notes that

in addition to the transformation of its religious culture, changes to the Salvation Army by the twentieth century also reconfigured its religious mission [which] in the nineteenth century... was “conversion of the lost”. In the twentieth century ... conversion of the heathen masses became the purview of the social work and was no longer rigorously evangelical... Salvation Army spiritual work increasingly focussed on “those already converted and ... those who were being nurtured in the faith.” Like the late-nineteenth-century holiness camp meetings, Salvationists in the twentieth century began “preaching to the choir”.<sup>27</sup>

Sermons began to get longer, and testimonies to diminish, and the officer to do more and more of the speaking. From time to time efforts were made to turn the clock back. Even in the 1890s there was concern that some officers were monopolising the platform:

It is rumoured that at some corps the soldiers and sergeants never have a chance, except in the open-air, the captain reserving all the indoor meetings to himself. Surely this is an exaggeration. The General is going to deal with this danger in a future number. Let us be awake to it, and do our utmost to avoid the snare.<sup>28</sup>

In 1928 Bramwell Booth wrote to an officer in charge of a corps he had visited, advising him to, “Rope in your own people in so far as it is at all possible to take part in platform [i.e. speaking, preaching] work. If the soldiers and locals felt the responsibility of speaking to the people the words of life and truth they would fit themselves for this work. This would relieve you of some of your platform responsibilities, and thus enable you to tackle other work.”<sup>29</sup> And General Edward Higgins wrote, “I am afraid the idea has sometimes got abroad that Officers are intended to be like parsons and preach sermons, to monopolize all the time of a meeting while the people they are supposed to lead in fighting do nothing.”<sup>30</sup> Despite regulation and precept, there seemed an inevitable drift towards a semi-formal churchliness, with parsonical performances from the officer.

Sadly, the custom of “lining out” the words of songs continued a century after all the people could read and had the words before their eyes – custom once fixed, dies hard. Too many meeting leaders then felt they had to justify the practice by preaching a mini-sermon midrash on the words they superfluously read aloud to their bored

<sup>26</sup> Taiz, *Hallelujah Lads*, 157, quoting Jobie Gilliam, “Salvation Army Theatricalities” (MA thesis, California State University, Long Beach, 1989) 150.

<sup>27</sup> Taiz, *Hallelujah Lads*, 160.

<sup>28</sup> *The Officer*, April 1893, 107.

<sup>29</sup> Catherine Bramwell Booth, *Bramwell Booth*, 492.

<sup>30</sup> Edward J. Higgins, *Stewards of God* (London: SA, undated but early 1930s) 16.

congregations. In time the afternoon “free and easy” evolved into the “Praise Meeting” in which, where it survived in larger Corps, the Band played to the Songsters and the Songsters sang to the Band, and both attempted to entertain the mainly Salvationists and their bored, long-suffering children who attended, with ever more esoteric offerings – including transcriptions from the Great Masters.

The former Commissioner A. M. Nicol, lamenting the Army’s loss of its first love in about 1910, gave a depressing picture of an Army meeting in a London Corps.

I visited a Corps in North London a few weeks ago which stands in the first grade. I think it is next to Congress Hall in respect of membership and Self-Denial income. It has an excellent brass band, a band of songsters, a well-organised Junior Corps, and the hall in which the meetings are held is situated in the heart of an industrial population on a site that is among the best in the neighbourhood. It has an excellent history and is respected by the people as a whole. Few people can be found in the neighbourhood to say an unkind word about it, although if the question was put to them if they visit the Corps, the answer would be that they “see the Corps pass by with its band, and some years ago, when Captain So-and-so was in charge, I occasionally looked in.”

What did I see and hear? A small audience, including officials, of about a hundred people and this Corps has a membership of some four or five hundred, a humdrum service without life in the singing, or originality of method or thought in the leadership, such as would not do credit to an average mission-hall meeting of twenty or thirty years ago. But for the music of the band and the singing of a brigade of twenty songsters the Corps would be defunct. The outside world was conspicuous by its absence. The audience was made up of regular attendants.

When the preliminaries were over, the Captain in a strident voice, as if the heart had been beaten out of him and he had to make up for the lack of natural feeling by the extent of his vocal power, announced that the meeting would be thrown open for testimony. As no one seemed inclined to get up and testify the surest sign that the Corps was no longer true to itself he informed the audience that he would sing a hymn. He gave out the number and the singing went flat. A sergeant, observing two young men without hymnbooks, went to the platform and picked up two and was about to hand the same to the strangers, when he was ordered by the Captain to put them back. “Let the young men buy books,” he said. I shall not forget the look upon that sergeant’s face; but being accustomed to the discipline of the Army, and being in a registered place of worship, he did not express what he evidently felt.

A song was next sung from the Social Gazette newspaper, one of the Army’s agency, and the Captain stated as an incentive to buy that “last week I had to pay five shillings loss on my newspaper account. For pity’s sake buy them up.” The appeal did not seem to me to strike a sympathetic chord in the audience.

Testimonies followed. Two or three were so weakly whispered that I could not catch the words another sign of the loss of that enthusiasm without which an Army meeting is

worse to the spiritual taste than a sour apple to the palate. Among the testimonies was the following given by a Salvationist of some standing:

“I thank God for His grace that enables me to conquer trials and temptations; I feel the lack of encouragement in this Corps. My work is to lead the youngsters. In that work I get no encouragement whatever. The songsters take little interest in their duties and it is impossible at times not to feel that they have lost their hold of God. The Corps does not encourage me, and though our Adjutant will not care to hear me say so, he does not encourage me.”

A woman got up and screamed a testimony about the lack of the Holy Ghost and the spirit of backbiting in the Corps, during which the two young men referred to walked out, and several soldiers in uniforms smiled, whispered to each other, and the meeting degenerated into a cross between a school for ventilating scandal and cadging for “a good collection.” And I declare that this spirit of the meeting is the spirit of the Corps in the Salvation Army throughout England and Scotland. It has ceased to be true to itself, and as a consequence, no matter how the Army organises and disciplines its forces, the future of the movement is black indeed, and will become blacker unless – But that is not my business.<sup>31</sup>

It could be understood that even though the words and music of the earlier era survived in the Song Book and usage of this later time, once the spirit had gone out of the concern in the way Nicol described, spontaneity would relapse into formalism in their performance. How far, with ‘redemption and lift’, might a gradual distancing from genuine working-class roots also contribute to this change?

Fortunately the worship of the Army in general evidently did not continue to sink into the morass Nicol described, partly because of some improvement in its musical skills and perhaps with the wider adoption of traditional church hymnody and the production of Army songs of greater merit. The Army’s “hymn sandwich plus items” format evolved into an instrument capable of fostering and maintaining its distinctive spirituality – even though this might appear unusual to outside observers. The story is told of a BBC producer who had recorded a meeting at Regent Hall Corps, London, for broadcast in the late 1960s. He remarked, “That was a very good concert. But tell me, when do you hold your service for worship?” Writing of Salvation Army worship towards the end of this period, Gordon Moyles says:

The present basis of the Army’s evangelical work is its two public worship services, conducted in all corps every Sunday. These too, on the whole, have become predictable, traditionalized and staid.

The predictability of Salvation Army worship, only infrequently thwarted by an imaginative corps officer, lies in the fact that a meeting format—opening song, prayer, choir and band selection, testimony period, sermon, appeal—originally adopted as innovative and lively, is now accepted as sacred and has become ritual. Salvationists

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<sup>31</sup> Alex M. Nicol, *General Booth and The Salvation Army* (London: Herbert and Daniel, [1910]) 336-8.

have forgotten that the novelty attached to early meetings depended not so much on their format as on their content: lively war songs, sparkling testimonies, sensational conversions, spontaneous demonstrations and unexpected diversions were the attractions that kept the Army barracks filled. This is not to say that revivalistic techniques have disappeared from Salvation Army worship; far from it. Revivalist specials still survive; at Congresses, where charismatic leadership is nearly always evident, one may still witness emotionally-charged scenes of repentance and conversion; and there are corps, particularly in the outports of Newfoundland, where one may still experience the exuberant evangelism characteristic of all corps a few decades ago. On the whole, however, and especially in those corps dominated by middle-class attitudes, routine and the desire for respectability have tempered the Army's exuberant mode of worship. Apart from the peculiar contribution of the band, there is little in a Salvation Army worship service which differs remarkably from what one might encounter in the Sunday services of any other conventional, conservative conversionist sect.

So much in Salvation Army practice has in fact become "tradition," and therefore sacrosanct, that the Army itself has become a bulwark of traditionalism. The improvisation and spontaneity of early Salvationism have been replaced by established ritual, and some of the results of that early improvisation have become sacred institutions, enshrined as effectively as sacerdotalism itself.<sup>32</sup>

John Cleary suggests that,

Salvation Army methods were so successful that the Salvationist culture was soon able to close itself off from the world. By 1912 Army music could be sold only to Salvationists and Salvationists were not permitted to perform non-Army music. Brass bands continued to have a powerful cultural role long after their evangelical influence had waned.

This is due in some part to the fact that group music-making is one of the most creative and cost-effective ways of mobilising a significant body of people for a purpose that is both personally fulfilling and spiritually uplifting. Additionally the brass band is one of the few group musical activities which is relatively simple to teach, yet allows amateurs access to the best and most sophisticated music of the genre.

While this gave Salvationist culture its international cohesiveness and strength, it turned the culture in on itself. The composer Eric Ball remembers Bramwell Booth speaking to cadets at the International Training College of The Salvation Army [describing the Army] as "A nation within the nations, with its own art and culture and music". The Salvation Army remained largely secure within this culture, insulated from the currents of the world for almost a century.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> R. Gordon Moyles, *Blood and Fire in Canada: the History of The Salvation Army in the Dominion 1882-1976* (Toronto: Peter Martin Associates, 1977) 231.

<sup>33</sup> Cleary, "Salvationist Worship..." 7.

In this respect, the maturing and institutionalised Army became for a time more, rather than less, sectarian, in the sense that it increasingly offered an all-embracing social milieu for its members, which probably went some way towards justifying Roland Robertson's description of it as an "established sect". Any tendency towards a denominationalising accommodation to the wider world was delayed by the very strength of its own sub-culture.

This was not all loss, however. The Song Books of the twentieth century provided a widening range of style and theological teaching. The 1953 and even more so the 1986 edition also sought to familiarise Salvationists with more hymns from the rest of the church, some going back to the middle ages and earlier. The Army also developed a genre of worship songs of its own, still deeply personal and in fact inward-looking rather than evangelistic as the early Army songs had been, but equal in style and content to anything in any tradition. To mention only two from the 1986 *Song Book*, firstly Olive Holbrook's 1934 gem:

**176**

Warrington, 56; Abends, 2  
L.M.

DEEP were the scarlet stains of sin,  
Strong were the bonds of fault within;  
But now I stand both pure and free,  
The blood of Jesus cleanses me.

2 Strong are the foes that round me creep,  
Constant the vigil I must keep;  
But from a secret armoury  
The grace of Jesus strengthens me.

3 What though the treacherous road may wind,  
Faith in my heart assures my mind;  
E'en when his face I do not see,  
The hand of Jesus reaches me.

4 This is the lamp to pilgrim given,  
This is my passport into Heaven,  
Portent of immortality,  
That God, through Jesus, dwells in me.

*Olive Holbrook*

And Albert Orsborn's well-known 1947 poem:



512

Spohr, 135  
8.6.8.6.8.6.

MY life must be Christ's broken bread,  
 My love his outpoured wine,  
 A cup o'erfilled, a table spread  
 Beneath his name and sign,  
 That other souls, refreshed and fed,  
 May share his life through mine.

2 My all is in the Master's hands  
 For him to bless and break;  
 Beyond the brook his winepress stands  
 And thence my way I take,  
 Resolved the whole of love's demands  
 To give, for his dear sake.

3 Lord, let me share that grace of thine  
 Wherewith thou didst sustain  
 The burden of the fruitful vine,  
 The gift of buried grain.  
 Who dies with thee, O Word divine,  
 Shall rise and live again.

*Albert Orsborn (1886-1967)*

Many other writers – Doris Rendell, Ruth Tracy, Catherine Baird, Will Brand, Bramwell Coles, Miriam Richards and Iva Lou Samples for example – made their mark.

Besides such song-writers as those mentioned, there were voices attempting to recover some freshness and instil some wisdom even in this period of increasing decadence and routine in worship. In other words, the prophetic tradition which had created the Army style in the first place was re-emerging to critique the pattern into which that style had become set. Of these, Fred Brown's *The Salvationist at Worship* was a classic exposition.<sup>34</sup> Frederick Coutts also wrote a series of articles in *The Officer*, and collected in his *In Good Company*, addressing the important elements of meeting leadership: public prayer, the structure of the meeting and the preaching of the word.<sup>35</sup> Would that both Brown's and Coutts's work were prescribed reading for all leaders of Salvation Army worship today.

What did not change with respect to the Army's own hymnody was its tendency to focus on the individual's interior spiritual life. There was a good deal of "I" and not a great deal of "we"; not many of its songs explicitly attempted to express the corporate worshipping life of the community. Nevertheless, at its best the kind of music and verse available this era went a long way towards meeting William Booth's desire for more true "worship" in Salvation Army gatherings and laid down a tradition capable of supporting the spirituality of ordinary Salvationists in a changing world.

<sup>34</sup> Fred Brown, *The Salvationist at Worship* (London: The Salvation Army, 1964).

<sup>35</sup> Frederick Coutts, *In Good Company* (London: The Salvation Army, 1980).

While the matter of Salvation Army architecture has not been explicitly addressed in this history, the design of the meeting place – from the earliest co-opted spaces in shops and theatres, to the purpose-built “Barracks”, to the increasingly ornate “Citadels” and “Temples”, to the diverse creations of modern architecture, some under the influence of the wider “liturgical movement” in the Church – would always have some influence on the kind of gathering which took place in it. A rare and valuable recent study of Salvationist architecture in the United Kingdom at least is that by Ray Oakley in his *To the Glory of God*.<sup>36</sup>

### 3. c. 1960 to the present day: a phase of diversity, or another stereotype?

In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century a restlessness crept in upon the established patterns. Some younger Salvationists began to look to more contemporary models for Army music-making. The iconoclastic editor of the Danish *War Cry* and author of that country’s territorial history, Brigadier Ketty Røper, in her “Reflections on Denmark’s 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Is it all Jubilation?” regretted that “Jazz is one of the modern powers which we – at any rate in Denmark – stifled at birth and with it many young people whose loss we now pay for dearly.” Recounting the story of one such group of musicians, she asked, “Why could we not admit that most of our meetings are boring... and that progress has ceased?”<sup>37</sup>

With the advent of Rock’n’Roll and the rise of youth culture, the guitar began to make its appearance in the Citadel. The Joy Strings burst upon the astonished Army world in the early 1960s, encouraged by General Coutts. Similar groups began to appear in other “western” territories, such as USA Western, Australia and New Zealand. John Cleary suggests this was a false dawn because the powerful and reactionary forces of Bands and Songsters were marshalled for the spate of Centenary Celebrations from 1965. The rock band remained peripheral to the Army’s vision.

Cleary’s comment is apt:

In 1965 the huge edifice that was Salvation Army music publishing had just entered its most mature and sophisticated phase. Both composers and musicians reached levels that put them on a par with the best in the secular world. Ray Steadman-Allen’s *The Holy War* marked the emergence onto the world stage of serious Salvation Army brass music. Eric Ball, Dean Coffin, and Wilfred Heaton, had prepared the way, but in 1965, with the International Staff Band’s album *The Holy War*, featuring Ray Steadman-Allen’s *Holy War* on one side and *Christ is the Answer – Fantasia For Band and Piano* on the other, Salvationist music had “arrived”.

In this holy war the Joystings were simply blown away. Salvation Army brass musicians around the world welcomed the success of the Joystings, but regarded them at best as a novelty, perhaps a distraction, and at worst as a satanic influence on true Salvationist culture. Numerous youthful musical aspirations were crushed by the contempt of local

<sup>36</sup> Ray Oakley, *To The Glory of God* (Leamington Spa: Privately published, 2011).

<sup>37</sup> *The Officer*, May-June 1962, 150-2.

bandmasters, and the threat of Headquarters to act against those who had not submitted their work to the Music Board for prior approval.

The Army of the 1960s failed to recognise that brass bands had come to occupy the very same niche that church choirs had in the previous century. Choirs achieved the highest form of musical art with the best composers writing great works of lasting value – men like Elgar, Stanford, and Parry. But though of great merit, they were totally out of touch with the sounds of the music halls and gin palaces, where the early Salvationists found their inspiration. Army bands might have been playing Toccata but it was the Joystings who touched the public.<sup>38</sup>

It is also true that the Army of the 20<sup>th</sup> century suffered under a disability less problematical in the 19<sup>th</sup> – the matter of copyright. Revivalists of the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries could set new and religious words to whatever popular tunes were being sung by the people they wanted to evangelise; by the 1960s that simply was not possible. From Scott Joplin to John Lennon to Mick Jagger, those melodies were now off limits, even if the copyright fees could have been afforded. A tremendous link with popular culture had been cut off; Christian musicians would have to provide their own and attract attention in a market never more competitive.

In succeeding years the great series of musicals with words by John Gowans and music by John Larsson contributed a score of lasting classics to the Army's hymnology. Indeed, some 20 of Gowans' songs were included in the 1986 book, including.

#### Love

### 50

How much more, 25

IF human hearts are often tender,  
And human minds can pity know,  
If human love is touched with splendour,  
And human hands compassion show,

*Then how much more shall God our Father  
In love forgive, in love forgive!  
Then how much more shall God our Father  
Our wants supply, and none deny!*

- 2 If sometimes men can live for others,  
And sometimes give where gifts are spurned,  
If sometimes treat their foes as brothers,  
And love where love is not returned,
- 3 If men will often share their gladness,  
If men respond when children cry,  
If men can feel each other's sadness,  
Each other's tears attempt to dry,

*John Gowans*

<sup>38</sup> Cleary, "Salvationist Worship...", 8.

Along with others by such writers as Harry Read, Maureen Jarvis and Howard Davies, for example, the songs from those musicals have made a lasting contribution. Unfortunately, these by themselves were apparently insufficient to inspire an indigenous Salvationist renewal of corporate worship. An opportunity seemed to have been missed.

The Salvation Army, having largely rejected the new life which was emerging from its own tradition, eventually bought into what was emerging in a different tradition. It was not until the 1980s that the “Western World” Army began to descend into the “Worship Wars” which were triggered by the rise of the charismatic movement and the burgeoning of new songs for yet another strand of revival. To some extent the Army succumbed to this influence because of the frustration of many Salvationists with an ossified tradition, so that they began looking elsewhere for inspiration – to Pentecostal and Charismatic styles.

Spasmodic attempts were made to address the need for some rejuvenation of Salvation Army worship over the years. Colonel (later General) John Larsson of the United Kingdom presented a paper on “New Joy in Worship” at a Church Growth conference in London – touching on what was a crucially divisive issue in some corps. New Zealand delegate Richard Smith’s Report stated:

In introducing this topic Colonel Ian Cutmore spoke of the need for ‘the kind of worship in our meetings that satisfies the people who come and will not stay otherwise’. John Larsson’s emphasis was on the need for real effort to make Sunday meetings the apex of all we do and so a major priority on the time of officers, musicians and other leaders in the corps situation. Colonel Larsson quite strongly stated that many of our meetings were stereotyped, were uncreative, were unsatisfying spiritually and were often the result of the regular turning of a handle to produce a patterned object. The value of the meeting in actually assisting every person present to lift their heart to God in praise and in obedience was much affected by the proper use of suitable words and music and the creative building of the meeting itself.

He quoted an American CSM who asked ‘would we want to spend eternity in a typical Army meeting? The meeting of Christians together for worship, for praise and for challenge should be the nearest thing to heaven we experience on this earth.’ GOSH! The possibility of larger corps particularly having a small group of qualified leaders as a ‘worship team’ responsible for the planning of the first 40 minutes of a meeting was floated. A major emphasis was the need to adopt styles of worship and communication which clearly spoke to the local cultural needs and expectations. The tragedy of the imposition of a conservative Anglo—Saxon worship and meeting style upon cultures all around the world was something that needed attention. Change would demand considerable openness to allowing liberating changes in terminology, music, and style. There was a strong feeling that in all territories and commands there should be an endorsement of the use of contemporary music in meetings, and the insistence that

officers facilitate inspiring meetings through the use of music and other means of communication.<sup>39</sup>

Despite such efforts, it was the Pentecostal-Charismatic mode, the “Worship Song”, rather than any home-grown Salvationist idiom which tended to be adopted by Corps in parts of the Western World. As a result, changes of an altogether more sweeping kind have overtaken Salvation Army worship in the last part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (and this is from a New Zealand perspective, and may not be apparent to the same degree elsewhere). And of course those changes were resisted most strongly by those who believed that the tradition they defended was that of the ‘apostolic age’ of the Salvation Army rather than the creation of the 1950s.

- In earlier days Sunday meetings at Salvation Army Corps had marked “similarities”, even internationally. Anyone going to “the Army” knew in general terms what to expect. Increasingly however, from the later 1970s, this became less the case. Meetings were marked now by variety, diversity and non-conformity rather than the uniformity, conformity and predictability into which the original Salvation Army free style had set. Each Corps might be very different in its worship expression. In some the traditional song-sandwich, with input from the usual musical sections, would be encountered. In others, an almost Pentecostal style of meeting might be found.
- Over the course of the last twenty or so years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the balance of probability swung in favour of the newer format, so that many Corps meetings now frequently look and feel more like a typical “charismatic” church service. The “Song Sandwich” has been largely replaced in some Corps by a long period of standing and singing choruses, with many people singing with hands raised above their heads, followed by a rather long Sermon. It has to be said, however, that in many cases it would appear to be the form rather than the spirit of the charismatic style which has been adopted. Uniformity, conformity and predictability still prevail, though of a different flavour.
- In some other Corps, worship has changed though not as much. Following a lurch towards the charismatic there is now a better traditional and contemporary balance in these. A period of chorus singing accompanied by a musical group (guitars, drums and electronic keyboard) is inserted into the already rather crowded meeting programme, not uncommonly introduced by, “Now we’re going to have a time of worship”, as though nothing else which has taken place to that point qualifies for that description.
- There has been a move away from the use of the Army *Song Book* and traditional “hymns of the Church” to use of music and song material from other, though limited, sources. “Songs of Praise” and “Songs of the Kingdom” were in turn superseded by songs of Vineyard and Hillsong provenance, amongst other material. There is a much reduced theological range in the sung material, with more of “me” stuff – as there was in the early Army, though with a different message and often less theological depth. There can be a concentration on “feel good”, triumphalist and “prosperity gospel” themes, to the exclusion of the original Army preoccupation with the needs of the lost

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<sup>39</sup> Richard Smith, “Report on Attendance at the International Strategy for Growth Conference, London”, 2-16 August 1989, 5-6.

and disadvantaged. It tends to be music for the self-conceived saints rather than for the sinners. What is sung in Sunday worship powerfully communicates doctrine, under the radar as it were, and reinforced through frequent repetition. Some material is quite sound; some surely questionable. Much of it is monotonous, both musically and conceptually; too often unsuited to congregational singing and boring to listen to. It also tends to perpetuate the individualistic focus, to the neglect of the corporate.

- In earlier days when almost exclusively the sung material for Sunday worship came from the *Song Book* more doctrinal checks and balances existed. Material to be included in each edition was closely vetted, filtered through the Doctrine Council. Now there is apparently less careful scrutiny or requirement, other than the need to avoid copyright infringements.

- In some Corps, the choice of songs is sometimes less in the hands of the Officer and more as selected by “Worship Leader”. William Booth, with his insistence on meetings being under the unifying direction of one person, would not have been pleased.

- There is less use of the Brass Band, which used to make a significant contribution in every meeting. In the New Zealand territory, Bands are struggling to survive, even in some larger corps. Their number has probably halved in the past thirty years. In many corps there has been an almost complete demise of uniformed music sections – no band, no songsters, no singing company, no junior band, no timbrels, etc.

- In many Corps the “worship team” has replaced the Band, Songsters, organ and piano, while in others there is a relatively comfortable cooperation between the new and the traditional music groups.

- The whole issue of worship styles and choice of material has been cause of much pain and concern, along “traditional”/“contemporary” lines. Some older, more traditional Salvationists feel betrayed and abandoned.

- There appears to be a dearth of public testimony from people who are not officers or aged senior soldiers, and opportunity is seldom given for such expression of experience.

- In the early 1960s, when Television was introduced to New Zealand, there was within a year or two a change in attendance patterns; instead of the morning meeting being the smaller and the evening meeting the larger, with greater likelihood of non-Salvationists attending, their attendances were reversed. By the 1990s, the evening meeting had begun to disappear entirely, despite attempts in places to make it a specialised “youth” meeting. The collapse of intentionally focussed “holiness” and “salvation” meetings into one event had implications for what was taught and preached. Traditional Wesleyan Holiness teaching largely disappeared – although other reasons have contributed to this change.

- Technology plays a larger part: e.g data projectors, projected song material, ‘powerpoint’ sermons, video clips, are common. (And sermons straight off the internet, not invariably taken from doctrinally impeccable sites, have become all too familiar.)

- In a few larger corps, multiple congregations have been attempted, with a number of relatively discrete congregations meeting at separate times.

In an attempt to provide some resources for development of worship, in 2003 General Larsson appointed Colonels Robert and Gwenyth Redhead, domiciled in Canada, to an international role as “General’s Representatives for the Development of Evangelism and Worship through Music and other Creative Arts”. This innovative appointment capitalised on the Redheads’ personal giftings but its effectiveness was really dependent upon their individual influence and example in the course of their extensive travels conducting meetings and workshops. Only so much could be done this way, and in any case the role did not survive their retirement in 2005.

This outline has really only referred to the “Western World” – and only to those parts with which I am familiar. Furthermore, some parts of that World might not recognise what I have described. Attending a small corps in Washington DC, USA, in 2004, I felt I had time-travelled back to the corps of my adolescence in 1950s New Zealand. But 80% of Salvationists are to be found today in the “Developing World”. While the “colonial” influence of western officers as missionaries and leaders long imposed a song sandwich model and acclimatised versions of European hymns on these territories, are they now breaking the mould and exploring indigenous ways of being Salvationists. Indeed, 35 and more years ago in Rhodesia-Zimbabwe there was a world of difference between the type of meeting and singing customary in the largely missionary-led Howard Institute Hall and the altogether more boisterous and *triple forte* celebration at a village corps, where people did not sing without simultaneously dancing, and there were as many vocal parts as in Tallis’s “Spem in Alium”.

Now that a new *Song Book* is appearing, it will be interesting to see how all these special interests are to be accommodated.

John Cleary asks of the way forward:

How do we bridge the gulf between contemporary style and theological substance? There is in fact a direct link between the lyrical and musical styles of today and the revolutionary message of William Booth and John Wesley. It can be found where evangelicals give hope to the most oppressed... The black spirituals spring out of a combination of the heart-felt cry of the oppressed and the world-redeeming hope of Wesley and Finney. It is music that is grounded in the love of God, speaks with the voice of the prophet, shows all the tenderness of Jesus and moves through the power of the spirit. It is no accident that out of this musical form sprang the most popular musical forms of the 20th century; Blues, Jazz, Rock and Soul. This is music that speaks from heart to heart. It lives with sorrow and pain yet sings of hope.

Black Gospel music is the bedrock of contemporary Christian music. The Salvation Army has missed this connection twice before. Once in the 1910s, when having so successfully embraced the sounds of the secular English Music Hall and the American Minstrel shows of the 1880s, we turned our back on the religiously based Blues and Jazz of the early 1900s. And again in the 1960s, the Joystings reconnected Salvationists with popular culture at a critical turning point in the modern world. Unfortunately the movement was deaf to the message.

The consistent path for the Salvationist is radical engagement. The Salvation Army needs to embrace contemporary Christian music. It needs to learn the lessons of its own history and infuse that music with a comprehensive sense of compassion and care, which belongs to the roots of Gospel music and the origins of The Salvation Army.

It is something of an irony that at the very time some Salvationists are questioning its mission, the evangelical church is rediscovering its need for a theology that engages with the world. Evangelists such as Philip Yancy and Tony Campolo in the United States, magazines like *Christianity Today* and *Christian History* are turning to the great evangelical revival for inspiration. The evangelical churches are recovering the message of William and Catherine Booth and the early Salvation Army.<sup>40</sup>

In conclusion, we look back to our introductory suggestion that we might distinguish three very general periods or phases in Salvation Army worship style, roughly parallel to the sociologists' analysis of Salvation Army history.

- We might take the first phase, enthusiasm, as an example of the “prophetic” attempt to recover first principles, in this case of the evangelisation of the poor and disadvantaged.
- The second phase, of routinisation, can be seen as an example of the reassertion of the “priestly” function of stability, the maintenance and preservation of what has been achieved.
- In the third phase there is a tension between the “prophetic” and the “priestly” and it is not clear whether they will learn to co-exist or one will achieve dominance for a period. The newer, charismatically-influenced worship style was itself the product of a revival movement, even as the “old Army” was in its time. However, by the time the charismatic movement came to influence the contemporary Army it was already losing its original momentum and turning into another example of a “priestly” phase of church life. Its music is in the course of becoming as esoteric and out of touch with the world as that of Herbert Howells or Ray Steadman-Allan. (How many non-Christians tune in to “Christian” radio? Or how many Christians, for that matter?) The Salvation Army has therefore “copped a double whammy”; it has been the locus of a struggle between two equally controlling and outdated modes. Perhaps Alice Cooper would be a better model than Hillsong of a genuinely spiritual voice in the contemporary world. A real diversity of source and expression, encompassing traditional Salvation Army classics, music from the charismatic tradition and other contemporary hymns (of which the Army is largely unaware) would be a helpful thing.

John Cleary's analysis of the present challenge suggests that the Salvation Army needs to look to its own roots for the inspiration and resources whereby it might renew its mission and worship. Perhaps a weakness in his argument is the assumption that all Army music must be evangelical and therefore to engage the “world” it must be focussed on and stylistically drawn from popular culture. The difficulty with this, as it has been since the second and third generations of Salvationists, is that the Army also needs to keep its own, home-grown constituency engaged. It needs therefore somehow

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<sup>40</sup> Cleary, “Salvationist Worship...” 9.



to maintain a smorgasbord of styles, fostering mutual acceptance and toleration, in order to keep the whole together.

## **Tribute to CSM Cyril Bradwell**

Major Harold Hill

About 18 months ago, Major Barbara Sampson and I had been meeting with Cyril at his flat, as a kind of editorial sub-committee for the book *Many Voices in Mission*, commemorating the Salvation Army's 125 years in New Zealand. Cyril was one of the major contributors to this – even without his sight. On this occasion he had been as always a fund of information about stuff which probably no-one else alive knew, and had contributed to discussion with his usual deliberation and incisiveness. As we came away, Barbara said to me, "Cyril must never die!" Indeed, how could we do without him? But now he has died ... someone who has been part of our landscape for almost as long as we can remember has gone, and now we must do without him.

My brief from Helen is to acknowledge Cyril the scholar – only one part of his many-faceted life, and one which can't of course be compartmentalised. Shakespeare might well have written of him, as he did of Brutus, "His life was gentle, and the elements so mixed in him that Nature might stand up, and say to all the world, "This was a man!"

When Cyril first went to university more than 70 years ago, the number of Salvationist graduates in New Zealand could be numbered almost on one hand. Even 40 or 50 years ago there was amongst us a deep vein of anti-intellectualism and a suspicion of learning – it was considered by some as tantamount to disloyalty and subversion. But no-one would ever have advanced such a criticism against Cyril – it was unthinkable because his simplicity of spirit, his natural authority, the quality of his Salvationism. In these days when it is taken for granted that people will equip themselves as well as they can for whatever task they undertake, we can remember that Cyril Bradwell's example and influence contributed significantly to that change in attitudes. His involvement in the Salvation Army Students' Fellowship and membership of the Editorial Board of the quarterly magazine *Battlepoint*, were accompanied by a close interest in and support for individuals. As Cyril's friend and near-contemporary, Envoy George Hazell of Sydney, said to me a few weeks ago, this interest was reciprocated amongst young and old with both "respect and affection".

Cyril's 1950 MA thesis was the first academic account of the origins and development of the Salvation Army in this country, a pioneering work. He contributed the section on the Salvation Army to the 1966 *Encyclopaedia of New Zealand*, and a number of entries to the *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*. One of his great gifts to the Army in New Zealand was of course the 1983 Centennial history, *Fight the Good Fight*, a thorough, erudite, insightful and scholarly account of which we can still be justly proud. Besides Corps histories for Linwood and Wellington South and numerous shorter papers, articles and monographs on various subjects, his two other major published works were his 1994 biography of his old friend, Commissioner Sir Dean Goffin, *Symphony of Thanksgiving*, and his own 2003 autobiography, *Touched with Splendour*. Less well known was his 1984 abridged edition of Sir Henry Brett's *White Wings*, about immigrant ships of 1840-1902, originally published in 1925. The book *Te Ope Whakaora: the Army that brings life*, published at the beginning of this year, opens with a paper Cyril

originally prepared for a Waitangi Day seminar in Christchurch in 2003, and the recent publication *Many Voices in Mission* contains no fewer than six articles by Cyril in what was to be his last public writing.

Cyril was the founding chairman of the Salvation Army Historical Trust and with Laurence Hay was instrumental in setting up the Army's Archives in New Zealand. Over the 30 years since his retirement from Wellington High School the Archives have claimed a large part of his time, a great deal of which was patiently devoted to answering enquiries about his correspondents' Salvationist forbears or providing information for local historians. Nevertheless the researcher amongst the files and boxes of those archives will frequently come across pages in Cyril's handwriting, giving extra information or explanatory notes, indicating the provenance of the material or providing some cross-reference, along with monographs on various subjects or potted biographies of past Salvationists. His scholarship and personal knowledge will thus continue to serve the Army's future researchers and historians. There is already a Nola Bradwell room at the archives in recognition of Nola's considerable services; I would strongly urge that with the prospect of eventual relocation to Booth College in Trentham, that the whole archive should also be named the "Cyril Bradwell Archive".

Scholars not only write; they read. I've been fortunate to be one of a team of people who have had the privilege to reading to Cyril since his eyesight failed and the range of his interests was remarkable – from the editorial and sports pages of the *Dom-Post* to history, biography, theology, poetry and novels. His was a mind alive and still intensely interested in everything to the end. Amongst other journals he subscribed to the literary periodical, *New Zealand Books*, and he never stopped buying new books! He also revisited old favourites, and towards the end these included his old friend General Frederick Coutts's *The Splendour of Holiness*. He relished Coutts's succinct, unadorned but scholarly prose and his simple and realistic account of Christian experience. That book ends with a prayer:

Grant, O God, that by the presence of thy Holy Spirit in our lives, we may be victorious over the world, the flesh and the devil, and so by our example testify to what great things thou wilt do in the lives of all who trust in thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

That resonated for Cyril. It was his kind of religion.

And having said that, I have to say that this scholar also prayed! Gavin Knight wrote of "hearing Cyril Bradwell talk ... of his decades-long prayer quest for the people of Germany. He started praying when he fought against Germans in the Second World War. He continued praying through the long years of the 'cold war'. Finally, he saw his prayers answered. In 1989 the Berlin Wall fell. The very symbol of the oppression of a people collapsed, just as the oppression itself collapsed. Hearing this experience of the power of prayer was inspirational for me," said Gavin.

One other story. Many years ago Cyril was attending a Salvation Army meeting when there was an appeal for Candidates for officership and a young man made his way forward to volunteer. This isn't my story so no names, no pack drill, but as the youth went forward Cyril heard a dismissive voice behind him say, "That fellow won't last!" Cyril resolved on the spot that he would make it his business that the fellow would last and that he would pray for him daily thereafter. More than forty years later that man is still a Salvation Army officer, still active in retirement, with a distinguished record of service. Cyril didn't tell me that story of course – he did not parade his piety– but he did eventually tell that officer that he prayed for him, and why. I wonder how many others have been sustained through the years by that hidden ministry of advocacy.

Cyril was on first impression a somewhat formidable figure; large, and laconic to the point of gruffness, but when he did speak, always commanding respect for his wisdom and practicality; a staunch, loyal and generous friend, robust and forthright when need be, combining gravitas and humour, he was wise and honourable, utterly without pretension or self-interest.

Cyril, we will miss amongst so many other things that characteristic slow grin and soft chuckle. You took the line "touched with splendour", a quote from a song by John Gowans, as the title of your autobiography, not as claim to personal greatness but as an acknowledgement of God's touch on your life. But our lives too were touched with splendour for having known you.

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*[In Africa – and Cyril taught in Kenya for a time – people are known by their totems, usually an animal species. I wonder what totem his Kenyan students assigned to Cyril. I have to confess that in our family he was privately known as "Mr Badger" – from the character in Kenneth Graham's classic children's tale, The Wind in the Willows. For those who don't know the story, the Badger was on first impression a somewhat formidable figure; large, and laconic to the point of gruffness, but when he did speak, always commanding respect for his wisdom and practicality; loveable upon closer acquaintance, a staunch and loyal friend, robust and forthright when need be, combining gravitas and humour, wise and honourable, utterly without pretension or self-interest, a scholar and keeper of history and lore was Badger. Kenneth Graham might have had Cyril in mind. I never admitted this nick-name to him, but I can image that Cyril's response would have been that characteristic slow grin and soft chuckle.]*

## Vision For the Lost or Lost Vision

Major Harold Hill

Vision for the Lost, or Lost Vision?  
- William Booth's Legacy 100 years on  
by Major Harold Hill

*A paper prepared for the  
Thought Matters Conference  
17-18 August 2012*



My field is history rather than theology, so I propose to offer some historical context for our theological discussion. To frame that context I will put four questions:

1. What was Booth's vision?
2. What do we now see?
3. How did that happen?
4. What now? Can the vision be re-found?

### **What was Booth's vision?**

When William Booth burst in the door of his Hammersmith home late one night in 1865 and exclaimed, "Darling, I have found my destiny!" he'd been walking through the slums of the East End of London. That glimpse of hell on earth constituted Booth's primary vision; hell was the East End writ large and forever. Commissioner Wesley Harris once asked Commissioner George Joliffe, once secretary to William Booth, what motivated the Founder. Joliffe replied, "His vision of Hell!"

Booth was fond of vision imagery, even collecting a series of articles in one volume entitled *Visions* in 1906. One of these says (I abbreviate):

I saw a dark and stormy ocean. ...

In that ocean I thought I saw myriads of poor human beings plunging and floating, shouting and shrieking, cursing and struggling and drowning; and as they cursed and screamed they rose and shrieked again, and then some sank to rise no more.

And I saw out of this dark angry ocean, a mighty rock that rose up with its summit towering high above the black clouds that overhung the stormy sea. And all around the base of this great rock I saw a vast platform. Onto this platform, I saw with delight a number of the poor struggling, drowning wretches continually climbing out of the angry ocean. And I saw that a few of those who were already safe on the platform were helping the poor creatures still in the angry waters to reach the place of safety....

As I looked on, I saw that the occupants of that platform were quite a mixed company. ... But only a very few of them seemed to make it their business to get the people out of the sea. ... though all had been rescued at one time or another from the ocean, nearly everyone seemed to have forgotten all about it. Anyway, the memory of its darkness and danger no longer seemed to trouble them... These people did not seem to have any care – that is, any agonising care – about the poor perishing ones who were struggling and drowning before their eyes...<sup>1</sup>

You know where the rest of this was going... To serve that vision, the Army was called into existence. And Booth believed that “If you were to take hell out of our doctrine, The Salvation Army would soon disappear”<sup>2</sup>

Booth did imagine scenes other than of hell; visions of the millennium, and of heaven. He speculated in 1900 that London could become the New Jerusalem, with Hyde Park roofed over to become “The World’s Great Grand Central Temple”.<sup>3</sup> His vision of the Millennium looked remarkably like a Salvation Army International Congress. And like those grand Congress occasions, the purpose of his sharing this vision was to motivate his followers to greater efforts on behalf of the lost. He visited heaven and interviewed participants in the Acts 2 account of Pentecost in order to bring back a hurry-up message from the Apostles and Saints to shirkers in the ranks. The focus was not the attainment of bliss but the compulsion to rescue people from hell.

But there was a further vision. Although acts of mercy and service were part of Booth’s Wesleyan dna and long featured in the Christian Mission’s agenda, from the late 1880s on Booth was persuaded that the depth of social deprivation the Army encountered made it too difficult for many people to hear and understand the message of Salvation. He had to do something about hell on earth as well as hell hereafter. While the Army was already engaged in social action, Booth came to see the need for more fences at the tops of cliffs as well as more ambulances at the bottom. Sometimes he even tried to do something about the levelling cliffs themselves. He saw that society, as well as the individuals comprising it, needed to be saved.

So he began to describe another, extended vision. Here’s an example, as reported by former Commissioner Alex Nicol:

In one of his most inspired moments he delivered an address to his Staff upon the Salvation Army of the future. He called it a vision. He saw:

- Homes for the Detention of Tramps.
- Transportation Agencies for Removing Slum Dwellers from one part of the world to another.
- Steamers owned and chartered by the Salvation Army for the purpose.

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1 William Booth, *Visions* (London: The Salvation Army, 1906 [1998]) 46.

2 William Booth, *The General’s Letters*, 225, quoted in <http://www.armybarmy.com/blog.html>, 10 April 2012.

3 William Booth, “The Millennium; or, The Ultimate Triumph of the Salvation Army Principles”, *All the World*, August 1890, 337-43.

- Stupendous factories, splendid stores, colossal workshops, and vast industrial enterprises.
- Inebriates' Home for "men and women who drink distilled damnation in the shape of intoxicants."
- Rescue Operations of many orders for the deliverance of fallen women.
- Land Colonies evolving into Salvation cities.
- Orphanages becoming villages and Reformatories made into veritable paradises.
- The working out of my idea for a World's University for Humanity.
- A Salvation Citadel in every village, town, and city.<sup>4</sup>

The post-millennial character of the Army's vision is evident in this 1895 American article:

When we consider in our times, and appreciate the fact that we are in the very beginning of the glorious Millennium, we have cause to rejoice... It has not been the reconstruction of society and government – the paternal – modelled after Bible times and practised by General Booth in his early Army – I say it has not been these improvements, although they have helped. The great power, as we are all aware, is the fact that people have been saved and cleansed from all sin by the Blood of Jesus. This is the power that has brought about this reign of unselfishness and love among the people of the earth. This is the reason the entire world speaks the same language, and the word "foreigner" is obsolete... It was upon the debris of social ruin that The Salvation Army built up a grander civilization – one that honored [*sic*] and served God... The Lord was with His Army as He promised (Joel 2:11). In the year 1900 A.D., The Salvation Army numbered 20,000 field officers, in 1925 A.D., 200,000, when every city, village, and hamlet in the entire world had corps. Whole cities had been converted. ... In 1950 the world was about conquered and the devil so discouraged that he gave up the fight.<sup>5</sup>

So what was Booth's vision? A vision of hell. But by late in Booth's life his vision encompassed not only Salvation *from* hell in this world for heaven in the next but the Salvation *of* this world as well.

### **What do we now see?**

Admitting that the 1950 millennial prediction was a tad premature, does what we now see look like Booth's vision?

To begin with, how about saving people from hell? An early-days Salvationist was an uncomfortable person with whom to share a railway compartment. You would be ear-bashed on the subject. Today, many of us are more anxious to demonstrate our inoffensive normality. The fact that many Salvationists have become less motivated to

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4 A. M. Nicol, *General Booth and The Salvation Army* (London: Herbert and Daniel, 1911) 136-137. The speech here summarised by Nicol may be found in William Booth, *International Staff Council Addresses* (London: Salvation Army, 1904) 47-58.

5 *The War Cry* (USA) 12 January 1895, p. 4, quoted in Allan Satterlee, *Turning Points: How the Salvation Army Found a Different Path*. (Alexandria VA: Crest, 2004) 79.

engage in personal evangelism probably indicates a slackening commitment to the doctrines underlying such activity. A diminished conviction that our neighbour is going to hell renders us less inclined to risk giving offence by trying to save him from it.

But lest we think this only came in with Rob Bell's book *Love Wins*, here's ex-Commissioner Nicol again, a hundred and one years ago. Commenting on the Fifth Doctrine, "We believe that our first parents were created in a state of innocence, but by their disobedience they lost their purity and happiness and that in consequence of their fall all men have become sinners totally depraved and as such are justly exposed to the wrath of God," Nicol wrote, "The Army is committed for all time to this doctrine and many others equally contentious, and some of which Staff officers no more believe in than they do that Bacon wrote Shakespeare."<sup>6</sup>

Really? Perhaps Nicol had the integrity to resign because he no longer believed those doctrines. Perhaps many of us have since found ways of re-interpreting them to our satisfaction, just as Anglican clergy once pledged a token adherence to the long-outmoded Thirty-Nine Articles of 1571.

This is not to say that modern Salvationists do not believe, or that sinners are no longer brought to salvation by our witness – they are, thank God – but Booth would probably consider some of us to be people "who do not seem to have any care – that is, any *agonising* care" – for the lost.

And what of Booth's other vision, of the salvation of society?

All over the world, battalions of Salvationists and employees are engaged in alleviating social distress. Sometimes they not only attend to the consequences of social evil but also seek to engage with its structural causes. For many years this last was somewhat understated, partly because of the increasing social conservatism of the Army's constituency and a fear of all things "political", but in recent years it has been given a more prominent place in our mission. The mission statement of the Army in New Zealand is, "Caring for people, transforming lives, *reforming society*".

Any hesitations? Booth's "Darkest England" scheme of "social salvation" in *this* life was intended to *support*, to *complement*, not to *replace*, his commitment to "spiritual salvation" for the *next* life. He feared that service could become an end in itself. Today many of those working for the Army in this field are not Salvationists, and need not be Christians, and may not be particularly in sympathy with that aspect of the Army's mission. In 2004 some New York employees sued the Army for insisting on it. They claimed that "When the Salvation Army's religious mission was made mandatory in our work place, it changed the climate in a way that caused us fear and concern about our ability to ethically deliver services."<sup>7</sup>

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6 Nicol, General Booth, 93-5.

7 <http://www.au.org/media/church-and-state/archives/2010/04/salvation-army-in-ny-cant.html>, downloaded 11 April 2010.



Although Salvation Army leaders have always been reluctant to allow donors, government or private, to determine our policies and values, we cannot resist the bait of those assiduously cultivated funds. Booth would take money from the devil himself and wash it in the tears of the widows and orphans – but the devil usually has his terms.<sup>8</sup> I know that there is a strong argument that our mission must be holistic, not confined to “saving souls”, and that even giving a cup of water in Jesus’ name contributes to the salvation of the world, but would Booth have been entirely satisfied that his vision was being embodied in all we do, both Word and Deed?

So, has the evangelical imperative become diluted? If that’s what we now see, and if it be thought that we *have* lost the vision,

### **How did that happen?**

We naturally idealise the early Army as a time of exponential growth, but statistically, the Australasian flood tide had peaked by 1900. In barely a generation the initial energy had begun to dissipate, the vision begun to fade. Reinhold Niebuhr echoed Luther in writing that, “By its very nature the sectarian type of organisation is valid for only one generation... Rarely does a second generation hold the convictions it has inherited with a fervour equal to that of its fathers, who fashioned these convictions in the heat of conflict and at the risk of martyrdom.”<sup>9</sup> The children and grandchildren of those who had experienced the miracle of the changing of beer into furniture did not necessarily enjoy the same kind of vital conversion experience of their own. They grew up within the world of the Salvation Army and it was their familiar sub-culture, but they did not necessarily inherit the evangelical imperative. Many found the sub-culture restrictive and they began to slip away.

Let’s not beat ourselves up. This was a perfectly normal and natural thing to happen. Renewal movements initiated by charismatic leadership, always institutionalise and decline. Sometimes they break out again in renewed vigour. This has happened within the Christian church many times since the original “Jesus movement” which shook the institutionalised religion of first century Judaea. The Montanists, the Monastics, the Mendicant Friars and late medieval movements, the radical Reformers, the Methodists and the Pentecostals all illustrate the seemingly inexorable progression of the seasons of divine inspiration and human endeavour. Radical religious movements tend to arise in eras of rapid change and transition, of cultural liminality, of chaos, to which they are in part a response. Because such periods often involve social and economic dislocation, these movements are also often marked by concern for the poor, or are identified with them. As Johan Metz put it,

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8 See for example an address to the 1921 International Social Conference by Commissioner Adelaide Cox in *Social Problems in Solution* (London: The Salvation Army, 1921) 39-41; Clarence Wiseman in “Call to Renewal and Change”, in John Waldron (Ed.) *Creed and Deed: Towards a Christian Theology of Social Services in The Salvation Army* (Toronto: The Salvation Army, 1986) 280; Dennis Garland, “The Salvation Army and the State of Welfare: An analysis of Text and Narrative.” MA (Hons) Thesis, University of Western Sydney, 2004, iii.

9 H. Richard Niebuhr, *Social Sources of Denominationalism* (New York: Meridian, [1929] 1957) 20.

[Religious orders/congregations] are a kind of shock therapy... for the Church as a whole. Against the dangerous accommodations and questionable compromises that the Church... can always incline to, they press for the uncompromising nature of the Gospel and the imitation of Christ...<sup>10</sup>

We fit the template. The Salvation Army emerged in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century as the latest body of Enthusiasts, those Max Weber called the *virtuosi*,<sup>11</sup> the dazzlingly skilled, the spiritual athletes. The Army was widely recognised as a *de facto* new religious order within the church. The poet Francis Thompson in an essay on “Catholics In Darkest England” wrote, “Consider what the Salvation Army is. It is not merely a sect, it is virtually a Religious Order...”<sup>12</sup>

But, as Gerald Arbuckle writes of Catholic Orders:

Historically, once these movements cease to be prophetic, though in Church law they may remain religious congregations, they are no longer authentically religious. By sinking to the level of purely human institutions they have lost their reason for being.<sup>13</sup>

The Army fitted this template also. Booth knew it was changing even in his day. Here he is in 1902:

[M]any ... officers are trying to do the Salvation Army without salvation – at any rate, with very little; trying to exemplify the principles of the most wonderful religious organisation that the world has ever seen with very little religion. They get into a formal or legal way of doing things and go on doing them without any results or with very little results because the life and heat, and fire and passion are burned out or almost out.<sup>14</sup>

So in 1904 he described another vision, for a new order of officers. He wrote (again, I abbreviate):

I thought ... I saw a new body of Officers suddenly start into existence...  
... they appeared to manifest extraordinary signs of earnestness, self-denial, and singleness of purpose; indeed ... a reckless, daredevil set. ... to welcome privations... to revel in hardships ... facing opposition and difficulties with meekness, patience, and love.

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10 J. Metz, *Followers of Christ: The Religious Life and the Church* (London: Burns and Oates, 1978) 12. Quoted by Gerald Arbuckle, *From Chaos to Mission* (Collegeville MN: The Liturgical Press, 1996) 11.

11 Max Weber, *The Sociology of Religion* (Boston: Beacon, 1964) 162-5.

12 Francis Thompson (Ed. Wilfred Maynell), *Prose Works* (London: Burns and Oates, 1913) 3, 57. (Kessinger Publishing 2003).

13 Arbuckle, *From Chaos to Mission*, 12.

14 P.W. Wilson, *General Evangeline Booth of the Salvation Army* (New York: Salvation Army) [1935] 1948, 132-3.

... they had voluntarily embraced the old-fashioned vows of celibacy, poverty, and obedience... vows ... only binding upon them for a term of years, with the option of renewal for a further term at the expiration of that period, or of being able at that time to honourably return to the ordinary ranks of Officership.

... they wore a novel kind of uniform ... evidently proud of their colours.

... refused to accept any money or gifts ... were pledged not to own any goods of any kind... except the clothes they wore.

... great wanderers... on foot, ... and speaking to the people in the streets... wherever they had opportunity, about death, judgment, eternity, repentance, Christ, and salvation...

... I saw their number... very, very small at first, gradually increase until they reached quite a multitude. And the educated and well-to-do, charmed with this simple Christ like life, swelled its numbers, coming from the universities and the moneymaking institutions and other high places.<sup>15</sup>

Booth was describing officers as he had expected them to be twenty five years earlier – and clearly recognised that they were no longer. He didn't admit that his troops were now too burdened with canvassing for funds, reporting statistics and managing the already-saved, all concomitant with the institutionalising of his vision, but he knew he now needed a *new* Order. Had he been 50 years younger, he would have *founded* it himself.

But he didn't, and his "old" order is now 100 years older. It will be obvious that in this I'm speaking of the Army in the West – of which Australasia is a part. The present surge of growth the Army enjoys in the "Developing World" may appear to parallel that of the Army's early days, but that's another study. It's the decline of the West with which I'm concerned here.

So how did it happen? Quite naturally and humanly. The reasons are as much sociological as spiritual.

### **So what now? Can the vision be re-found?**

Can the Army of the West be *re-founded*? Gerald Arbuckle would say not only *can* but *must!* Arbuckle is a New Zealand Marist priest who works out of Sydney consulting with Catholic religious congregations (Orders) internationally. He draws a distinction between "renewal", which is really just tinkering with the existing responses to a situation, and "refounding", which is about in-depth, radical change in the face of change. He defines refounding as "a process of returning to the founding experience of an organisation or group in order to rediscover and re-own the vision and driving energy of the pioneers."<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> William Booth, International Staff Council Addresses (London: The Salvation Army, 1904) 144-147.

<sup>16</sup> Arbuckle, From Chaos to Mission, 3.

There is a need for such a rediscovery when society enters a renewed period of change and chaos. The mission which responded so aptly to the challenges of an earlier period may now be stuck in the form created to address conditions which no longer obtain. Of course society is always in transition but sometimes change becomes exponential. As a time of rapid change and transition, of cultural liminality and chaos, the last half of the twentieth century has been equal to the era of the Army's founding.

Arbuckle says that "when people own their powerlessness, they return to the sacred time of the founding of the group. There they can ask fundamental questions about their origins, about what is essential to the founding vision and what is to be kept, and what is accidental and to be allowed to go."<sup>17</sup>

It is not my purpose now to draw up lists of what is accidental and what is essential, but we've been debating the *non-negotiables* of Salvationism for years now. Our debate is sometimes framed largely as an exercise in renewal, concerned with the trappings, and which of them we want to retain or discard, rather than focussed on the vision itself. Our nearest approach to a reform of officership some years back managed some comparatively minor changes – most of them subsequently reversed – because we did not go deep enough. But can deep change come about from the top?

Casting a vision is one of the functions of leadership. Admittedly change in hierarchical organisations requires permission from on high, but is that where change is initiated? People can rise to leadership by conforming to the established patterns, and even when they do not, their room for manoeuvre is likely to be limited when they finally arrive at the top.

Permission-giving is important – the classic is Commissioner Harry Read's liberating order of the day to the British Territory, "Just *do* something; I give you permission to fail". But real change begins from the bottom. What alert leadership does is read the signs of the times. Edward Schillebeeckx makes the point that throughout the history of the Church whenever there has been any significant change, "on each occasion official documents sanction a church practice which has grown up from the grass roots."<sup>18</sup> The profound change embraced by the Roman Catholic Church after John XXIII had called the Second Vatican Council in 1962 had been fermenting beneath the surface for several generations.

It ferments also beneath the surface of the Salvation Army. As Arbuckle goes on to say, after describing how prophetic movements become human institutions, "When this happens, new prophetic movements within the Church and/or re-founding people arise within existing congregations to challenge them to return to the radical demands of the Beatitudes."<sup>19</sup> A buzz-word in the evangelical community in recent decades has been the "new Monasticism" – another way of describing an attempt to re-found. We have

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17 Arbuckle, *From Chaos to Mission*, 87.

18 Edward Schillebeeckx, *Ministry: A Case for Change* (London: SCM, 1981) 3.

19 Arbuckle, *From Chaos to Mission*, 12.

their representatives within the Army – what else were Alove and 614 and ArmyBarmy and neo-Primitive Salvationism about? It's significant that such new movements almost invariably propose to serve the poor, and include a focus on social justice. Are they the "new order" Booth envisaged?

Let's tease out further what is involved in "refounding." Arbuckle suggests that the "most powerful myth is the group's creation story"<sup>20</sup>, which in our case is Booth's vision. Arbuckle says that every founding myth contains within itself polarities, such as the tension between individual rights and the common good in a free, democratic society. Just so, the polarity between individual and social salvation is intrinsic to our Salvationist myth and our vision. It is Booth's own multifaceted vision that has left us with this theological dilemma between Word and Deed, between "saving" and "serving". It's encouraging that Booth's polarities of personal and social salvation are maintained and perhaps better integrated in today's emerging Army. Divergent views of what Salvation consists of – and its application to this world or the next – need to be held in tension.

There are related polarities, such as the one encapsulated by Booth's lament that "I have been trying all my life to stretch out my arms so as to reach with one hand the poor, and at the same time to keep the other in touch with the rich. But my arms are not long enough."<sup>21</sup> This is an area of both theological and ethical challenge for the Army today, if we are still reluctant to challenge unequivocally the structural greed which divides rich and poor in our societies, divides the rich and poor nations, and threatens the very survival of the biosphere. As Anglican Bishop Peter Selby has written recently in *The Tablet*, "Our slavery to the principalities and powers represented by what money has been allowed to become has to be broken."<sup>22</sup> We could be thinking – and speaking – more radically about these things, but would that offend our donors?

But there are other polarities, also likely to be exposed by the shifting world-values around us. What of the challenge offered by the intellectual dislocation of secularisation and post-modernism, the continuing fall-out of what Callum Brown has described as "the pretty comprehensive nature of the collapse of Christian culture in the 1960s"?<sup>23</sup> The Army has been able to respond to some social and economic trends; we have been less ready to comprehend, let alone respond to, the secularisation of society and the loss of fundamental religious identity this has involved. Has our theology has equipped us to address this change? Let me fly a kite here.

Does recovering Booth's vision for the lost necessarily mean reverting to his theological frame of reference? Indeed, can another polarity, this time between conservative and innovative theology also be discerned even in the Founder himself? Certainly he had no

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20 Arbuckle, *From Chaos to Mission*, 66.

21 <http://www1.salvationarmy.org/heritage.nsf/36c107e27b0ba7a98025692e0032abaa/463c4193456551e980256b8a0037ea9a!OpenDocument>. Sourced 5 August 2012.

22 Peter Selby, "Wake-up Call", *The Tablet*, 4 August 2012. <http://www.thetablet.co.uk/article/163054>. Sourced 5 August 2012.

23 Callum G. Brown, "What was the religious crisis of the 1960s?" *Journal of Religious History* 34:4, December 2010, 472.

interest in the Higher Criticism of his day but read of his enthusiastic reception of new translations of Scripture – he placed a copy of the Twentieth Century New Testament in the hands of each officer in 1904. He had no truck with the literal verbal inerrancy which came to be identified with fundamentalism – he wrote against it. Or even reflect that as an early adopter of Phoebe Palmer’s new, streamlined theory of holiness, Booth was running ahead of the Wesleyan majority of his time. Or that his radical resolution of the debate on sacramental usages was an attempt to cut through a Gordian knot which still binds the church at large? Or that his commitment to the role of women in ministry was counter-cultural? Again, has Booth’s own vision left us an inheritance of theological diversity? If so, can we embrace it?

We have not done that well. Like a certain other hierarchical ecclesiastical institution, we have a history of making it difficult for people who think outside the square to remain in our ranks. Nicols resigned in 1910. Fred Brown was forced out in 1970. How many others have simply slipped away unnoticed? Were not Alexander Nicol and Fred Brown, with hearts for the lost as well as questioning minds, also legitimate inheritors of the Founder’s vision, equally with those who were content to parrot the formulae and proof-texts of the Doctrine Book? We can ill afford to lose those who ask the hard questions about our theology. Captain Matthew Clifton recently announced his resignation, explaining that

Energising as the covenant was while evangelical belief could be sustained, I have the wrong kind of personality to have foreclosed enquiry by binding myself to religious truth claims.<sup>24</sup>

That was his choice of course, but do we *want* to “foreclose enquiry”? Can we afford to? More than half a century ago Colonel Catherine Baird wrote to General Kitching in defence of allegedly “modernist” Salvationists whom she claimed were being “witch-hunted”:

Surely [she wrote] anyone should be ashamed to have, after 30 years, no deeper, clearer understanding of the atonement, holiness, last things, and other great doctrines, than he had at the beginning. And surely, this deeper knowledge does not mean that he has departed from that which he first knew. Given the alphabet, a child can write simple words and little more. In manhood, he may write a sonnet. But that does not mean that he no longer believes that “cat” spells cat.

... If we want the sort of young people who care more for truth than for privileges and places, we shall have to consider a matter of such vital importance without fear or prejudice.”<sup>25</sup>

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24 Former Salvation Army Officers’ blog: <http://fsof.blogspot.co.nz/>, downloaded 11 July 2012.

25 Quoted by John C. Izzard (edited by Henry Garipey), in *Pen of Flame: the Life and Poetry of Catherine Baird* (Alexandria: Crest Book, 2002) 112.

With Colonel Baird, I believe we must encourage and nurture our radical thinkers. We need them. I don't believe that retreating into reaction is a way forward for us. Fundamentalism may seem a refuge from hard questions, and its current surge may offer an apparent highway, but it's a dead end. I wonder about the latest revision of the *Handbook of Doctrine*, announced in recent weeks, described as a "correction for clarity". It appears to retreat from Booth's position on Scripture, perhaps to accommodate more comfortably our Fundamentalist comrades?<sup>26</sup> Or perhaps it just leaves more options open. In that case can we please move beyond the totalitarian, sectarian ethos where any opinions expressed are assumed to be representing the Army, and therefore must be vetted for doctrinal soundness? As Dean Smith has cogently argued, Liberals and Evangelicals may not be singing from the same song sheet, but could "agree to disagree without moral judgement."<sup>27</sup> Perhaps what I'm asking for is, in Brian McLaren's phrase, a "generous orthodoxy".<sup>28</sup>

If, like that polarity of Word and Deed, the polarity between theological conservatism and innovation is also intrinsic to the myth and vision inherited from our Founders, it is in the tension of such polarities that new vision is generated – as it was in Booth's day. So:

1. What was Booth's vision? *One of hell, and salvation, here and hereafter.*
2. What do we now see? *Perhaps not quite the same vision, or with the same clarity of vision.*
3. How did that happen? *Quite naturally.*
4. Can the vision be re-found? *Yes! But it will look different.*

The alternation of renewal and decline as the context within which we have attempted to place our visionary theme reminds us that entropy and dissolution are not the whole

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26 "On behalf of the General, I am pleased to announce a change of wording for a paragraph found on page 11 of the Handbook of Doctrine (Chapter 1 – 'For further exploration' - 1.A.3. - page 11).

"The old wording in question includes:

"The inspiration of the Bible provides a foundation for our understanding of the reliability of the divine revelation in Scripture. It is uniquely inspired in a way that is different from other writings or works of art. However, this does not mean that the Bible is infallible or inerrant, so that it is incapable of misleading and contains no human error. Whereas we believe that the overall message of the Bible is inspired and reliable, each individual passage must be read and interpreted carefully, in context, and with careful reference to the whole of biblical truth.

"Effective immediately, two paragraphs will replace the one above:

"We believe the message of the Bible is inspired and reliable. However, each individual passage must be read and interpreted carefully, in context and with reference to the whole of biblical truth.

"We affirm that we can rely upon the Scriptures for instruction and guidance in matters of divine truth and the Christian life, because in Scripture we meet the Word of God himself, Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit who inspired the writers also illumines those who read its pages and leads them to faith."

The War Cry (NZ) 11 August 2012, 17.

27 Dean Smith, "Are Liberals and Evangelicals singing from the same song sheet?" The Heythrop Journal XLVIII (2010) 14.

28 Brian D. McLaren, *A Generous Orthodoxy* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006).

story. In the Salvationist micro-climate, we may occasionally have our equivalent of what in the Catholic Church Karl Rahner called a “winter period”, and we may regret the repetitive pattern of institutionalisation and decline, but we can rejoice also in the reiterated springtime which, God-willing, ensues. May the Holy Spirit give renewed vision for our times.

Remember Gerard Manley Hopkins’ lines:

*And for all this, nature is never spent;  
There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;  
And though the last lights off the black West went  
Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs –  
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent  
World broods with warm breast and with ah!  
bright wings.<sup>29</sup>*

Harold Hill  
New Zealand, Fiji and Tonga Territory

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<sup>29</sup> From “God’s Grandeur”, by Gerard Manley Hopkins. Gerard Manley Hopkins: A Selection of his Poems and Prose by W. H. Gardner (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1953) 27.



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## **If I had My Time Over Again**

Major Harold Hill

We know the famous last words: "If I had my time over again, I'd..." But I probably wouldn't, or couldn't, even if forewarned. The person I was back then tried to do the best he knew how; the person I am now might try to do some things differently, but he wasn't around at the time! But still, five things I might have benefited from learning earlier are:

1. I need to sort out my own stuff first. As the cabin crews' pre-take-off spiel reminds us, we need to put on our own oxygen mask first before attempting to assist anyone else.

I pick up a certain amount of debris in the course of life's events, in my relationships with God, myself and others (including The Salvation Army). If I don't deal with this stuff, it will keep getting in the way of everything else I do, including my ministry. Dealing with it is what the doctrine of holiness is about, and for that one of the most cogent and practical toolkits is to be found in the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. For the convenience of anyone not familiar with these, here they are:

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol – that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take a personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of his will for us and the power to carry that out.

12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practise these principles in all our affairs.

Before anyone shies away from the word “alcohol”, let me say that while we may not all have the alcohol, we all have the “ism”. Another name for it is “sin”. And for those uncomfortable with “God as I understand Him”, does anyone have any other kind? And in case we’re above this sort of thing, we do well to remember Paley’s warning against contempt prior to investigation.

2. I need to be accountable to someone – other than, as well as, my line manager. Ministry (including leadership and administration) is a team-activity; lone rangers get into trouble. No social worker or counsellor is considered “safe” without accountability; ministry is no different. Regular supervision, mentoring, spiritual direction – whatever name we give to it – is like preventative maintenance for a car: regular servicing may save expensive repairs, or failure, down the road. There is a proviso of course. To quote the “Big Book” of Alcoholics Anonymous: “We must be entirely honest with somebody if we expect to live long or happily in this world.”

3. I can forget about looking for the silver bullet. The way we have chased after every new guru and wizardry is reminiscent of Hosea’s picture of Ephraim like a silly dove, fluttering between Egypt and Assyria. Some programmes of church growth and other such “business models” have been more like Ponzi schemes, gobbling up our time, energies and resources but leaving us weaker and poorer than before. The Salvation Army’s own systems might actually work if they’re worked at. (I love the summary given by Commissioner Amos Makina: “Preach the Word; visit the people; always get a receipt!”)

4. I need to practise servant-hood. (“Servant Leadership” if God chooses.) This can have implications for structures, because hierarchical, quasi-military systems are a hazardous environment for the spirit because of the seductive nature of power. It calls for special vigilance to be able to live counter-culturally within them. Therefore, this is even more a matter of attitudes, and about serving rather than using people; being there for them, rather than assuming they’re there for us, and for the fulfilment of our particular vision. My father once told me, “At the end of the day, the only part of our work that may endure is what we have contributed to the lives of others.”

The first edition of *Servants Together* in 2002 proposed guidelines for both structural and attitudinal aspects of servant-hood in this way:

Develop non-career-oriented leadership models. Dismantle as many forms of officer elitism as possible. Continue to find ways to expand participatory decision-making. Teach leaders to be servants by modelling it.

Most of us can't do much about these things on the macro-level, but we all can on whatever level we find ourselves. Micah put it simply: "Deal justly, love mercy and walk humbly before God".

5. I need to keep my eyes on Jesus, the "author and finisher" of my faith – the one who began it and can bring it to completion. Ironically, professional Christians especially need this word, as our occupation can give delude us into thinking that going through the motions is living the life. As George MacDonald said, "Nothing is so deadening to the Divine in man as the habitual handling of the outsides of holy things." Other things and people can then become substitutes for the real presence of God and we end up living vicariously instead of authentically. Keeping our eyes on Jesus centres us in the right place.